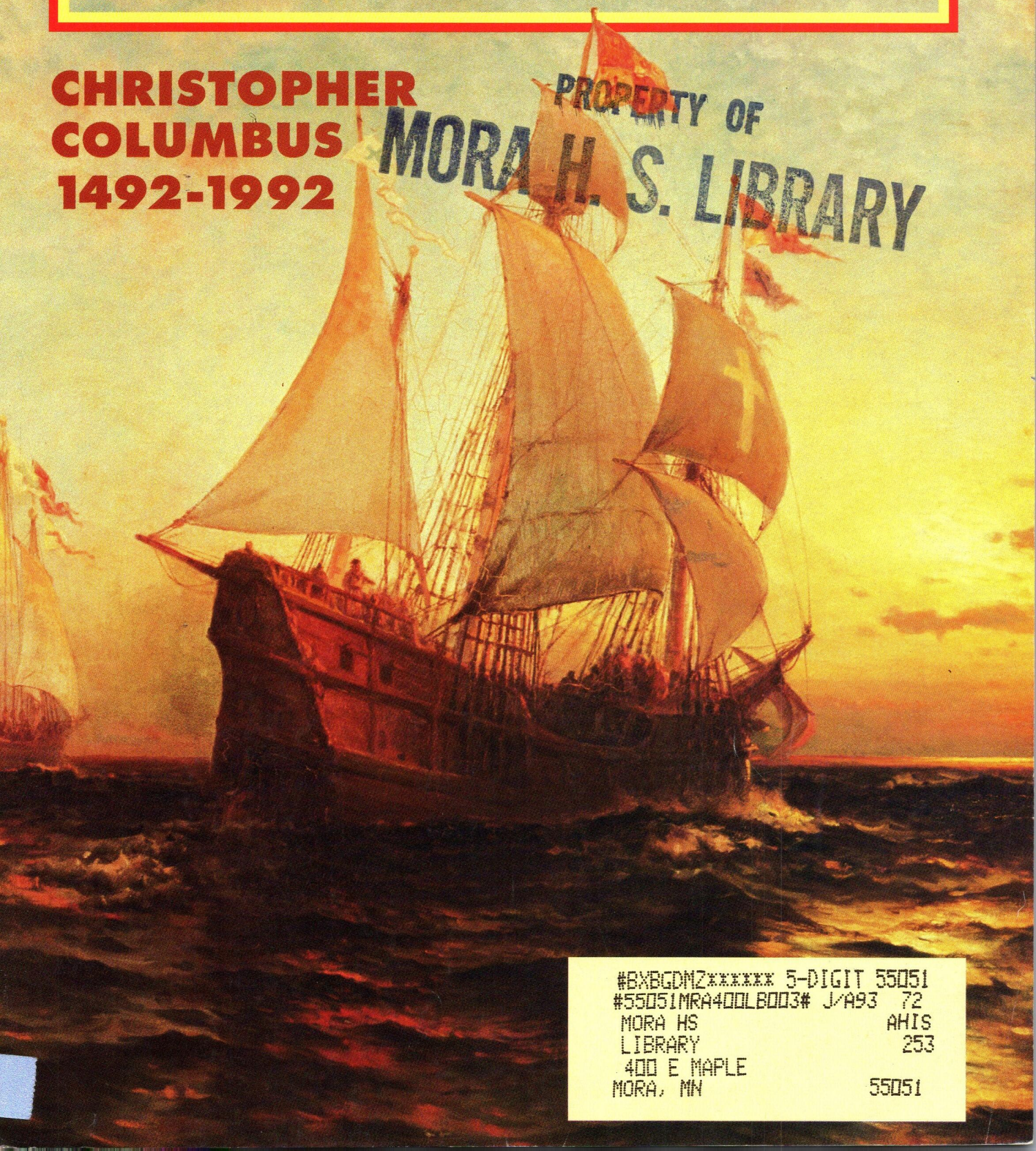
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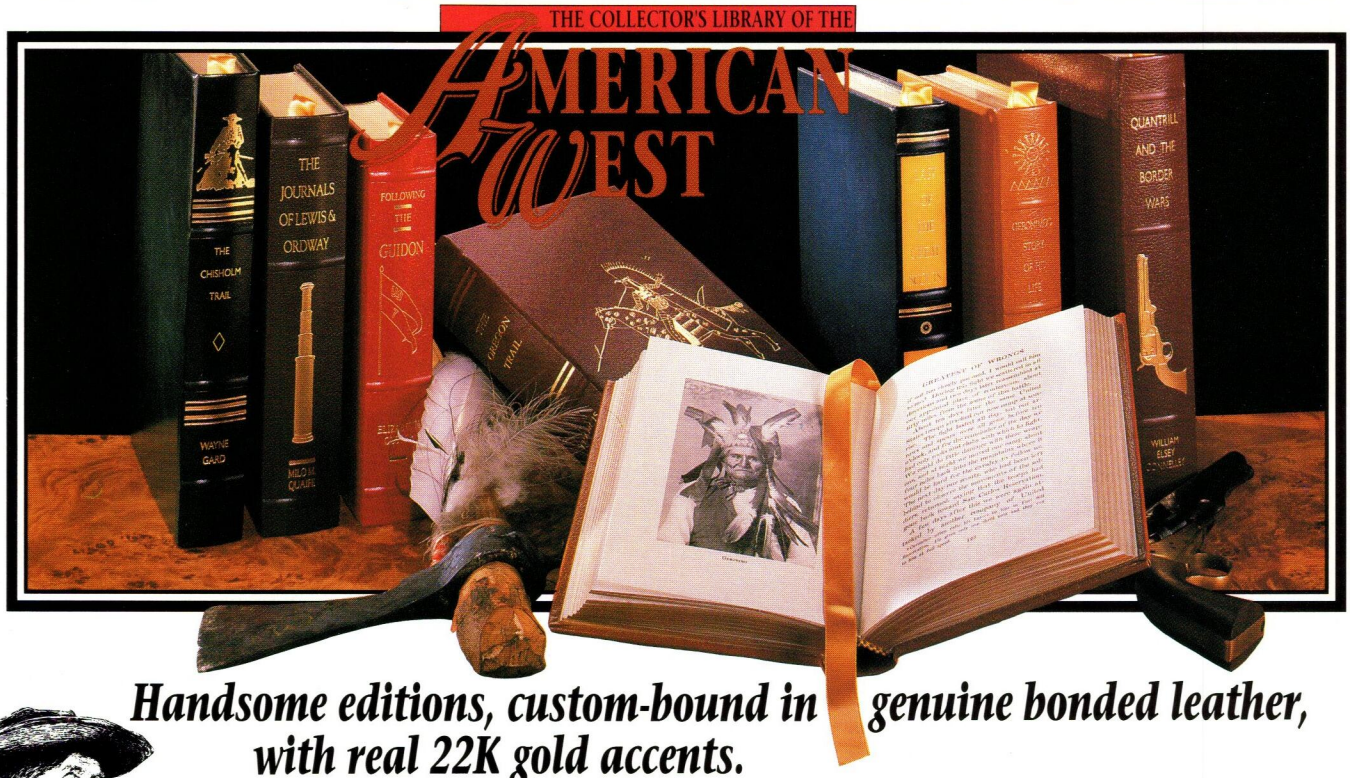
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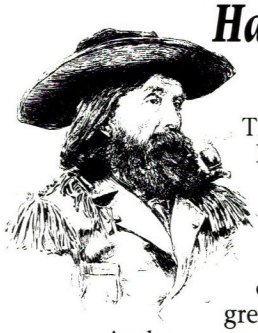


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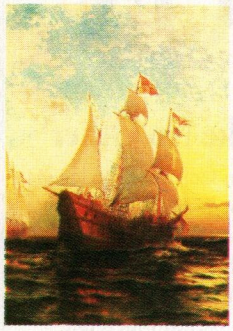
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The Adventure of the American Past

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Volume XXVII, Number 4

September/ October 1992



COVER

Half a millennium ago three small ships under the command of Christopher Columbus sailed west from the Canary Islands and far into unknown seas. After thirty-six days the explorer and his crews found land—not the outlying islands of Asia that Columbus expected, but the fringes of two great continents populated by heretofore unknown peoples. Neither present-day controversy over how this encounter ultimately affected America's indigenous peoples nor debate over who really "discovered" the New World can obscure the fact that Columbus was one of the few men whose dreams and actions have changed markedly the course of world history. An article on this most famous of all explorers and the chain of events that brought him to the New World appears on pages 28-43.

COVER PAINTING BY EDWARD MORAN (DETAIL OF THE ORIGINAL); REPRODUCED COURTESY OF THE U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY MUSEUM, ANNAPOLIS.

FEATURES

28 Voyage of Destiny

In the predawn twilight of August 3, 1492, three small ships left the Andalusian port of Palos and sailed into the tranquil Atlantic. For Genoa-born Christopher Columbus, this departure for unknown regions marked the conclusion of a decade-long struggle to obtain royal patronage for his vision of reaching Asia by boldly sailing west. The explorer had no way of knowing that he was doomed to fail completely in his attempt to reach the Indies—nor that he nevertheless was embarking on perhaps the most significant voyage in recorded history.
by William D. Phillips, Jr., and Carla Rahn Phillips

44 The Day the Daltons Rode into Town

One hundred years ago the author's grandfather—then nine years old—had a front-row view when one of the Old West's last and most electrifying shootouts began.
by Rosemary Davis

48 The White House

A place of history made and in the making, the stately two-centuries-old presidential mansion in Washington, D.C. reflects the dreams of the visionaries who created it, the lifestyles of the presidents who have occupied it, and the values and aspirations of the citizens who own it.
by Edward Oxford

58 The Man Who Burned Washington

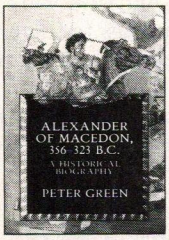
Audacious Admiral Sir George Cockburn dealt the young American republic a memorable and humiliating blow when his troops occupied and torched its capital city—including the Congressional Chambers and presidential mansion—during the War of 1812.
by Gary Glynn

DEPARTMENTS

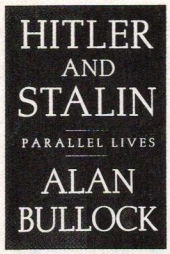
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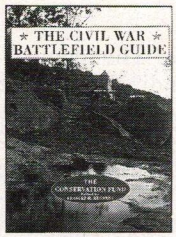
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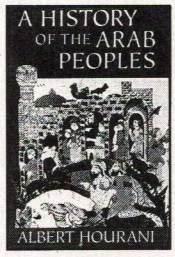
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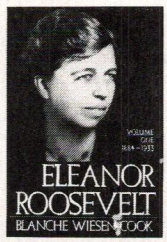
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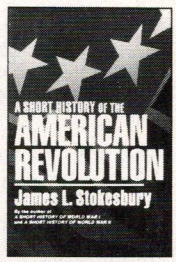
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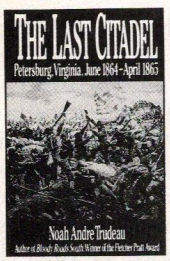
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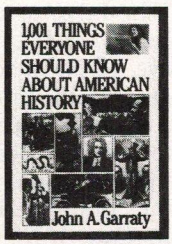
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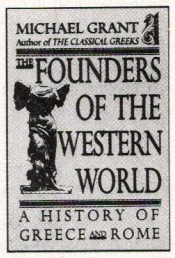


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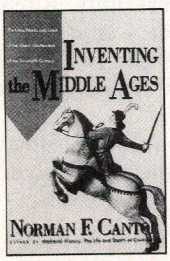
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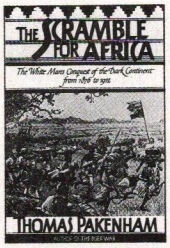
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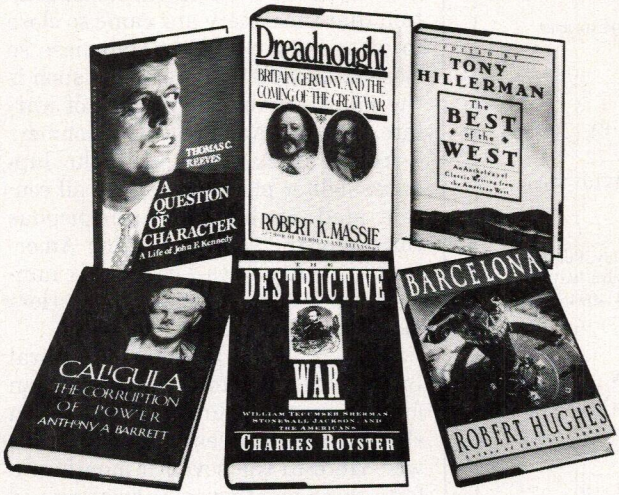
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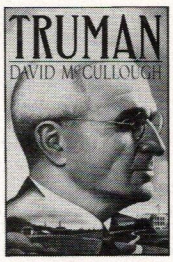
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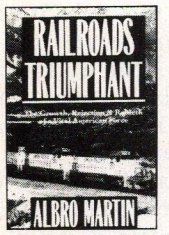
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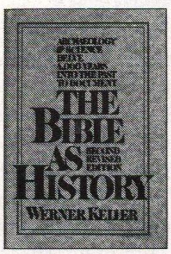
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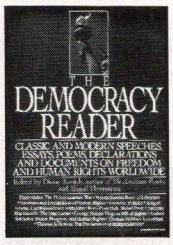
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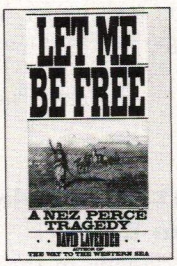
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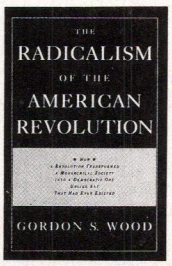
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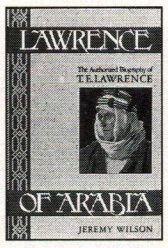
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Mailbox

Midway Article Outstanding

I must congratulate Thaddeus V. Tuleja for his outstanding article on the Battle of Midway in the July/August issue. It is so splendidly written that I have learned more from this single narrative than from anything else I have seen about the classic naval action that turned the tide of Japanese military aspirations.

I think that Captain Tuleja's most valuable contribution was his revelation that the Americans came so close to utter failure and the Japanese so close to complete success. Yet such is the unfathomable chanciness of warfare that the American dive-bombers —freed from harassment by the Japanese fighter planes that were all concentrated against the conspicuous threats of the self-immolating American torpedo planes—in only six minutes sank three Japanese carriers and later a fourth.

Midway gave Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto sad justification for his private feeling that his nation should not have embarked on this war. Here in the seventh month of a forty-three-month war, Midway proved he was right. Tuleja has told us all this (except for Yamamoto's misgivings) in a scant seven printed pages.

Richard F. Lemal
North Plainfield, New Jersey

M1903 Springfield Among the Best

In "Agony in the Pacific" (May/June issue), Frank Taylor states the Philippine army was not well trained and was "armed with obsolete 1903 vintage rifles." The U.S. Army was guilty of many things, but it is not necessary to lay blame on the venerable U.S. M1903 Springfield rifle (the weapon Taylor must have referred to).

The M1903 was one of the best, if not the best, bolt-action rifles in existence. Admittedly, at the start of the war it was in the process of being replaced by the U.S. M1 Garand, a semiautomatic rifle approved because of its potential for increased firepower. But even in the face of the M1's advantages, the M1903 did not disappear. The Marine Corps continued using the older weapon well into the war, as did the Navy. In fact, the last versions of the old rifle were in evidence in both branches to the end, and the M1903 was a favorite for use by snipers.

Arnold W. Kopser
Hyde Park, New York

Balloon Made First Indoor Flight

Your July/August edition arrived yesterday, and a small error caught my eye. In the pictorial on the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition, a caption (on page 49) says that aviator Lincoln Beachey's flight through the unfinished Machinery Hall was the "first-ever indoor flight." Not so. In May 1878, Charles F. Ritchell's "flying machine" (a balloon) flew in Philadelphia's concert hall. Ritchell was from nearby Corry, and his machine is part of our area's rich history.

Incidentally, I found this your best edition yet.

Anne W. Stewart
Meadville, Pennsylvania

Fair Included Miniature Railway

I enjoyed reading the July/August issue of *American History Illustrated* from cover to cover. "The Enchanted City" was of particular interest, since we saw one of the 1915 exposition's restored buildings last year.

There was one attraction, however, that was not mentioned in the article. This was the "Overfair Railway," a 19-inch-gauge [about one-third prototype size] railroad. Several miniature steam locomotives pulled passenger cars along the bay from Machinery Hall to the race track at the other end of the fairgrounds. Most of these locomotives are still in existence [including one preserved at the California Railroad Museum in Sacramento].

C. H. Slayton, Jr.
Mt. Airy, Maryland

The editors welcome comments from our readers. While we endeavor to publish a representative sampling of correspondence, we regret that limited space prevents us from printing every letter. Address correspondence to "Mailbox," American History Illustrated, Box 8200, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17105. ★

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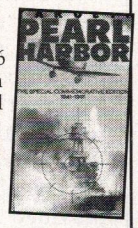
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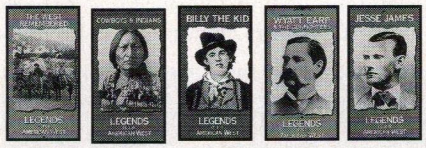
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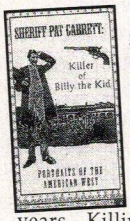
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History Today

Pledge of Allegiance Centennial

One hundred years ago Francis Bellamy penned the "Pledge of Allegiance" to the American flag as part of a special commemorative program designed by the staff of *The Youth's Companion* to mark the four-hundredth anniversary of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the Americas and to promote respect and reverence for the national flag. Schools across the country embraced the program devised by the magazine and included the pledge in their October 1892 Columbus Day festivities.

The pledge, whose words were altered slightly in 1923-24 and again in 1954, soon became a focus of daily flag observances in the nation's public schools, though its status as the official pledge of allegiance to the U.S. flag was not affirmed by Congress until December 1945. Despite its general acceptance, several protests against inclusion of the pledge in school programs have resulted in decisions by the U.S. Supreme Court that uphold the right of those with religious or philosophical objections to abstain from its recitation.

A small exhibit highlighting the history of the pledge and the various controversies it has sparked is on view in the rotunda of the National Archives in Washington, D.C. through January 1993. For more information telephone 202-501-5525.

Information provided by Anne Funderburg.

Patriot's Remains Return to a Free Poland

When Jan Ignace Paderewski died in New York on June 29, 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt granted the Polish pianist, composer, and patriot a "temporary" resting place in Arlington National Cemetery until such time as his homeland, then occupied by Nazi Germany, again was free [see May/June 1991 issue]. A forty-five-year reign by the Communists, who assumed control of Poland after World War II, delayed the day when Paderewski's wish to be returned to a free and democratic Poland could be realized.

Finally, after fifty-one years, Paderewski's remains were taken on June 26 from the USS *Maine* Memorial in Arlington to the Fort Myer Chapel, where they lay in state until the next day. Following a memorial service, a horse-drawn caisson, accompanied by a U.S. military honor guard, carried the coffin to the cemetery's main gate for transfer to Andrews Air Force Base and the flight to Poland. Secretary of Veterans Affairs Edward J. Derwinski, the highest-ranking Polish-American in the Bush administration, headed the U.S. delegation that traveled to Poland. On June 29—the anniversary of Paderewski's death—his remains were met in Warsaw by Polish president Lech Walesa and other government leaders. Observances there and in Poznan—where in 1918 Paderewski's arrival sparked an uprising that helped bring about Poland's independence—were followed on July 5 by a funeral mass and interment in Warsaw's St. John's Cathedral. President George Bush, declaring Paderewski's return "one of the greatest honors of my presidency," attended the final rites.



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Re-examining the Korean War

"A Revolutionary War: Korea and the Transformation of the Postwar World," the U.S. Air Force Academy's fifteenth military history symposium, convenes at Colorado Springs from October 14 to 16. Participants in the five scheduled sessions will re-examine the Korean War as a seminal event in the post-World War II era.

Sandwiched between the Allied military victory in World War II and the tragic U.S. involvement in Vietnam, the Korean War only recently has been perceived as a watershed that transformed key elements in the postwar world. In addition to representing a "revolution" in American foreign policy as the U.S. became the free world's chief "policeman," the conflict also tested the notion of collective security with the United Nations acting as a military coalition; provided an impetus for Japan's economic recovery; heralded the emergence of the People's Republic of China as a major power; changed the traditional patterns of development in North and South Korea; witnessed dramatic changes in the application of airpower as jets replaced propeller-driven aircraft; and brought about dramatic changes in the American military with the first tentative steps toward racial integration and the important role of reservists in combat.

For more information contact Major Tim Castle, HQ USAFA/DFH, USAF Academy, Colorado 80840-5701; 719-472-3230.

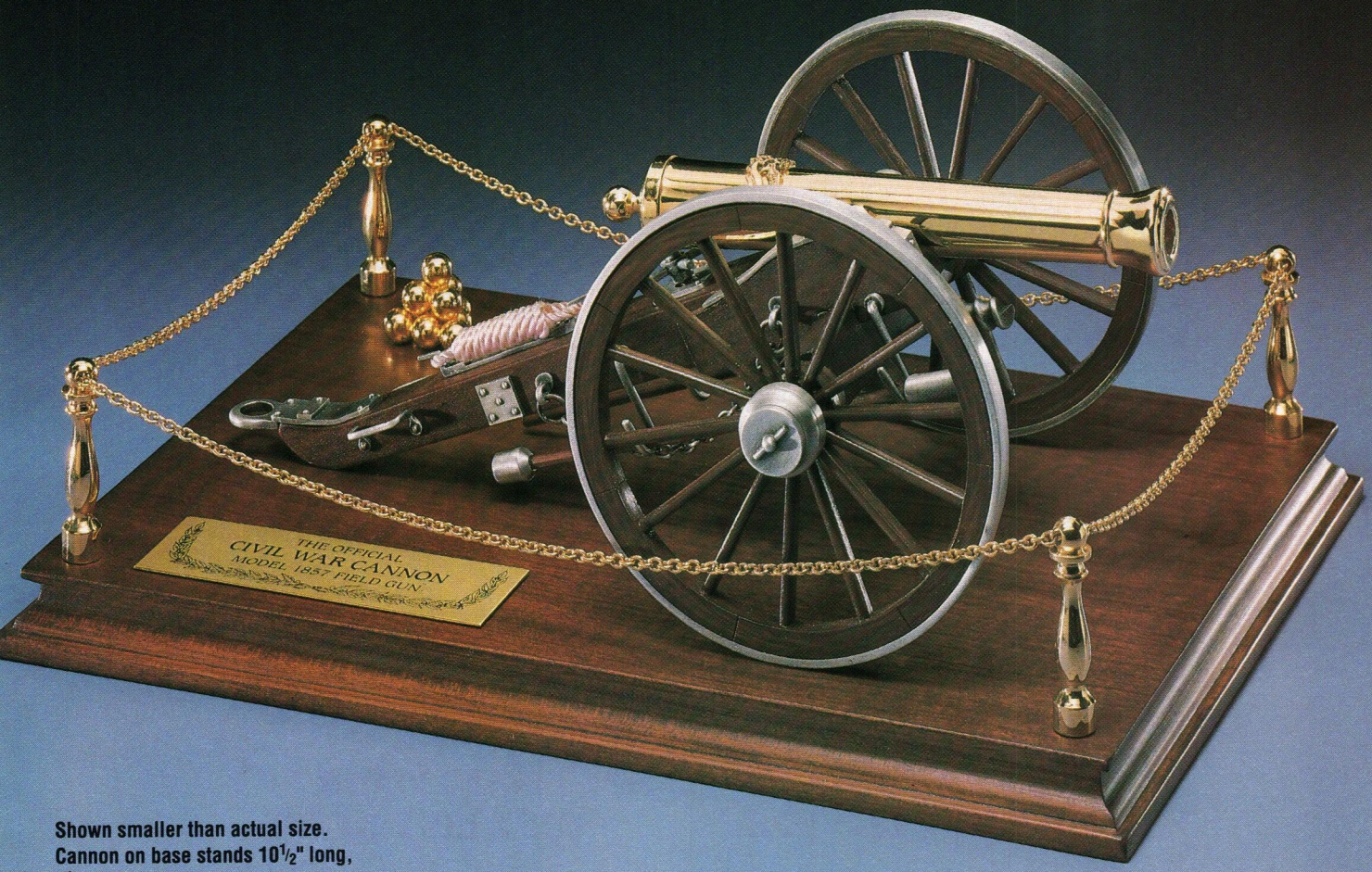
States Ratify 1789 Amendment

As a result of a vote taken in the Michigan legislature in May, a 203-year-old proposed amendment has acquired a sufficient number of state

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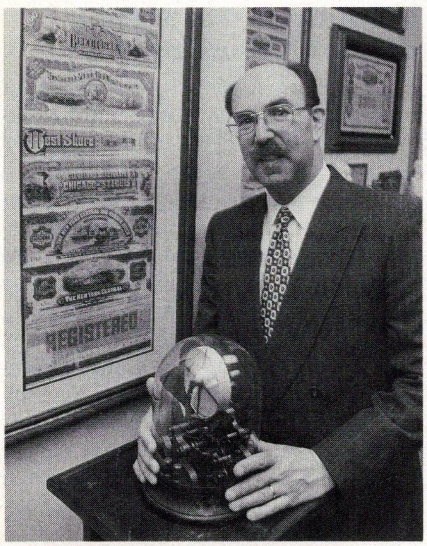
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votes—thirty-eight of fifty—to be added to the U.S. Constitution. Stipulating that "No law, varying the compensation for the services of the Senators and Representatives, shall take effect until an election of Representatives shall have intervened," the bill was one of two that failed to receive approval by the required three-fourths of the states when twelve amendments for the protection of individual liberties were presented for ratification by the first Congress in 1789. Although no time limits for passage were imposed on the proposals, the other ten, which constitute the esteemed Bill of Rights, received sufficient state approbation by 1791.

It now remains for the National Archives to determine that the bills ratified in each state were identical before passing the amendment to the president for his signature. Even if this process runs smoothly, the future of the amendment is in question as legal scholars debate whether the states that ratified the amendment two centuries ago can be bound by that vote. A challenge in the courts the next time members of Congress vote themselves a raise may determine whether what could have been the second amendment to the Constitution survives as the twenty-seventh.

Museum of American Financial History

The Standard Oil Building—situated on the lower Manhattan site where Alexander Hamilton, America's first treasury secretary, once had his office—is now appropriately the permanent home of the Museum of American Financial History. Founded in 1989 by John E. Herzog, the museum is a repository for artifacts that articulate the role of business and capital markets throughout the nation's history.



MUSEUM OF AMERICAN FINANCIAL HISTORY FOUNDER JOHN E. HERZOG.

The museum's first exhibit, on view through mid-September, chronicles the evolution of stock and bond certificates, focusing on the artwork and printing employed by a variety of companies during the last 150 years. To celebrate the 1992 bicentennial of the New York Stock Exchange, items relating to that institution's history also are on display. Future presentations will highlight such topics as financing the Civil War; American Revolution debt certificates; and the Penn Central Collection (1850-1976).

For more information contact the Museum of American Financial History, 24 Broadway, New York City 10004; 212-908-4110.

White House Symposium

During October 13 through 15 the historic Willard Hotel in Washington, D.C. hosts "The White House: The First 200 Years," a symposium jointly sponsored by the White House Historical Association and the National Park Service. Following a keynote address by Daniel Boorstin, librarian emeritus of the Library of Congress, participants will hear such speakers as William Seale, George Reedy, Julie and David Eisenhower, and David McCullough examine the White House as an institution and symbol of American democracy; its contributions to our cultural heritage; and its impact on the lives of presidential families.

Lincoln More than Country Lawyer

Recent discoveries among the files of Illinois courthouses have put to rest the notion that Abraham Lincoln's legal career consisted solely of petty and morally correct civil cases. "The Lincoln Legal Papers: A Documentary History of the Law Practice of Abraham Lincoln, 1836-1861" is a project administered by the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency in Springfield, established to search out papers that shed light on Lincoln's law practice, one area of the sixteenth president's life about which little was known.

During a twenty-five-year legal career in which he was involved in more than three thousand cases, the future president did help friends and neigh-

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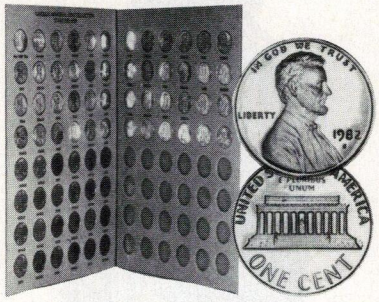
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bors in routine personal disputes, but he also represented major manufacturing and transportation companies and dealt with such issues as individual freedom, social order, economic development, taxation, corporate behavior, and personal liability. The picture that emerges is one of a legally astute practitioner who could use the law to his clients' advantage, even, as a recently uncovered case demonstrates, when that client obviously was guilty of manslaughter, if not murder.

After the gathering phase of the project ends, probably in 1993, the estimated 37,000 collected documents will be edited and published in a multivolume set.

For more information contact the Lincoln Legal Papers, Old State Capitol, Springfield, Illinois 62701; 217-785-9130.

Kipling Documents Resurface in Vermont

A tin box marked "Personal Papers of Rudyard Kipling," left in a Brattleboro, Vermont bank vault during the noted British author's "Vermont period," recently has resurfaced and been placed in the care of the Marlboro College's Howard and Amy Rice Library, repository of an impressive collection of Kipling materials. The box contains drafts of eight poems (one heretofore unpublished), Kipling's marriage certificate (witnessed by author Henry James), and a rare piece of correspondence between Kipling and his American literary agent and brother-in-law Wolcott Balestier, whose relationship with his client has been the subject of much speculation by Kipling scholars.

Kipling's wife Caroline may have deposited the box when the couple stopped in her hometown of Brattleboro on the first leg of their 1892 around-the-world honeymoon. The Kiplings lived in the Brattleboro area for four years, during which the author penned or published such works as *The Seven Seas*, *Captains Courageous*, and the *Jungle Book*. Kipling and his family (two of his three children were born in Vermont) left for England in 1896 when a long-simmering feud with Caroline's other brother Beatty erupted in a scandal that captured national attention. "Naulakha," Kipling's former Vermont home, has been acquired by the Landmark Trust, a British preservation group that plans to open the house and its contents to the public.

Tests on Lincoln's Tissue Postponed

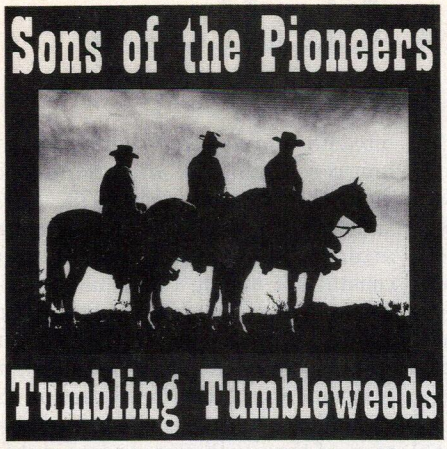
A committee formed by the National Museum of Health and Medicine in Washington, D.C. has recommended postponing planned genetic testing of specimens—bone fragments, hair strands, and bloodstains—obtained during the 1865 autopsy of Abraham Lincoln, for evidence that the slain president might have suffered from Marfan's syndrome, an inherited connective tissue disorder.

The initial request to conduct such tests came from Dr. Darwin J. Prockop, director of the Jefferson Institute of Molecular Medicine at Philadelphia's Jefferson Medical College, who first would have to determine through destructive analysis whether, after more than 125 years, testable DNA remains in the Lincoln specimens. If Prockop's preliminary analysis established the presence of DNA, he hoped to make a library that essentially would contain all of Lincoln's genes, which then would be available for further study.

The recommendation for delaying such tests derives from recent dramatic advances in understanding the molecular bases for Marfan syndrome and the conclusion that scientists should learn even more before proceeding. The committee further recommended that the museum and the National Marfan Foundation coordinate efforts to acquire additional specimens that may exist in institutional or private collections. The ultimate decision on the testing will be made by the Board of Governors of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, the museum's parent body.

Kentucky's Old State Capitol Refurbished

The Greek Revival building that served as Kentucky's capitol in Frankfort from 1830 to 1910 has reopened in time for the state's bicentennial following a two-year project that included extensive roof repairs and repainting interior walls as they were prior to the Civil War. Designed by Kentucky architect Gideon Shryock, a protégé of Benjamin Latrobe, the two-story limestone structure resembles a Greek temple and boasts such features as a self-supporting circular stairway. Replaced by a new, larger capitol in 1910, the building has been home to the Kentucky Historical Society since 1920. ★



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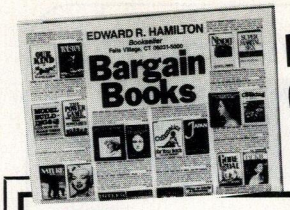
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American Gallery

1492: An Ongoing Voyage

Part of the Library of Congress's Christopher Columbus quincentenary program, this exhibition at the James Madison Memorial Building in Washington, D.C. explores the issues surrounding the dramatic meeting of cultures that occurred when the explorer landed in the Bahamas in 1492. Exhibits describe the societies existing on both sides of the Atlantic at the time of first contact, juxtaposing the indigenous peoples' self-perceptions with European views; illustrate the expansion of geographical knowledge that resulted from the voyages of discovery; and focus on subsequent European encounters throughout the Americas and the variety of responses by Native Americans. Martin Waldseemüller's 1507 *Cosmographiae Introductio*, in which the name "America" first appears, and the 1541 Huejotzingo Codex, an illuminated document produced by the native people of Mexico on pre-Columbian handmade paper, are among the items on display until February 14, 1993. For more information telephone 202-707-2905.

New Worlds: North Atlantic Seafaring in the Era of Discovery

As part of its Christopher Columbus quincentenary celebration, the Maine Maritime Museum in Bath focuses on fifteenth- and sixteenth-century transatlantic seafaring in an exhibition on view through January 1993. Maps, charts, navigational instruments, and artifacts document such topics as coastal life among the inhabitants of Maine and Canada's Maritime Provinces before the sixteenth-century arrival of Europeans; Europe's changing geographical perceptions based on cartography, as the ancient Ptolemaic view of the world was modernized following the discoveries of Columbus and his successors; the imprecise science of navigation; and the superstitions and exaggerations that conjured paradisical islands and strange sea monsters. For more information telephone 207-443-1316.

We Claim These Shores: Native Americans and the European Settlement of Massachusetts Bay

Until January 15, 1993, the Peabody Museum in Salem, Massachusetts marks the quincentenary of Christopher Columbus's arrival in the New World with this exhibition designed to provide visitors with a balanced and accurate view of the complex interaction between peoples of two radically different cultures. Among the more than one hundred Native American and European artifacts are stone and metal tools, personal items, ceramics, weapons, documents, books,



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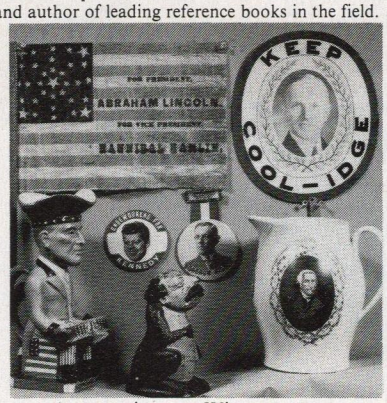
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and paintings that help outline the initial encounters between indigenous peoples and the explorers and fishermen who came to their shores. For more information telephone 508-745-1876.

The White House in Miniature

In commemoration of the White House bicentennial, a sixty-by-twenty-foot fully-furnished replica of the presidential mansion, created by John and Jan Zweifel of Florida, is featured at the National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. until September 7. The one-inch-to-one-foot scale model has toured extensively throughout the U.S. and abroad since 1976. Exact down to the types of wood used in the miniature furnishings, the oils and textures of the paintings, and details of the carpets, drapes, and bedspreads, the model also displays tiny hand-blown glass goblets and chandeliers, and functional televisions, telephones, and clocks. The model's cutaway walls enable visitors to view White House public areas, the presidential living quarters, the Oval Office, and the press briefing and Cabinet rooms. The model will be on view at the Kennedy Library in Boston beginning November 16. For more information telephone the National Museum of American History at 202-357-1300.

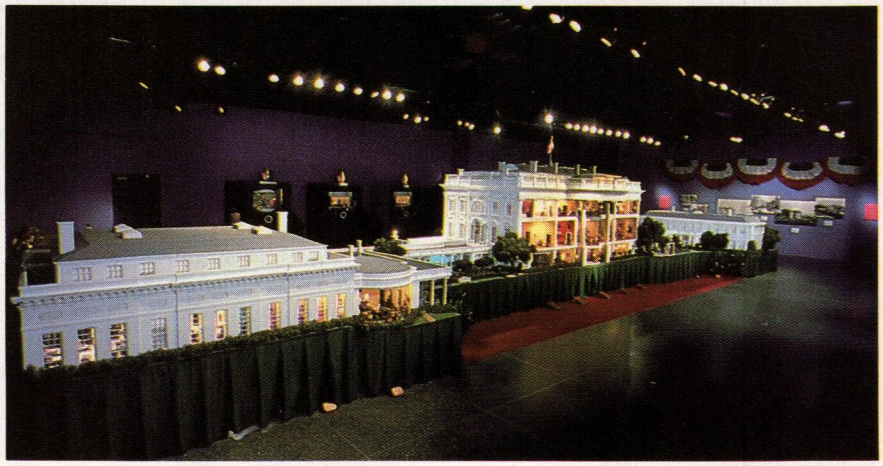
A second Zweifel creation, a fourteen-by-twenty-eight-foot diorama depicting George Washington's March 14, 1797 inspection of the then-under-construction presidential mansion, is on view at the American Institute of Architects in Washington until October 15. Built on a three-quarter-inch-to-one-foot scale, this exhibit features dozens of documented vignettes of craftsmen, artisans, and laborers at work and is intended as a tribute to the common people whose skills fashioned an enduring national symbol. For more information telephone the American Institute of Architects at 202-626-7300.

Faces of Change: Kentucky's Second Century, 1892-1992

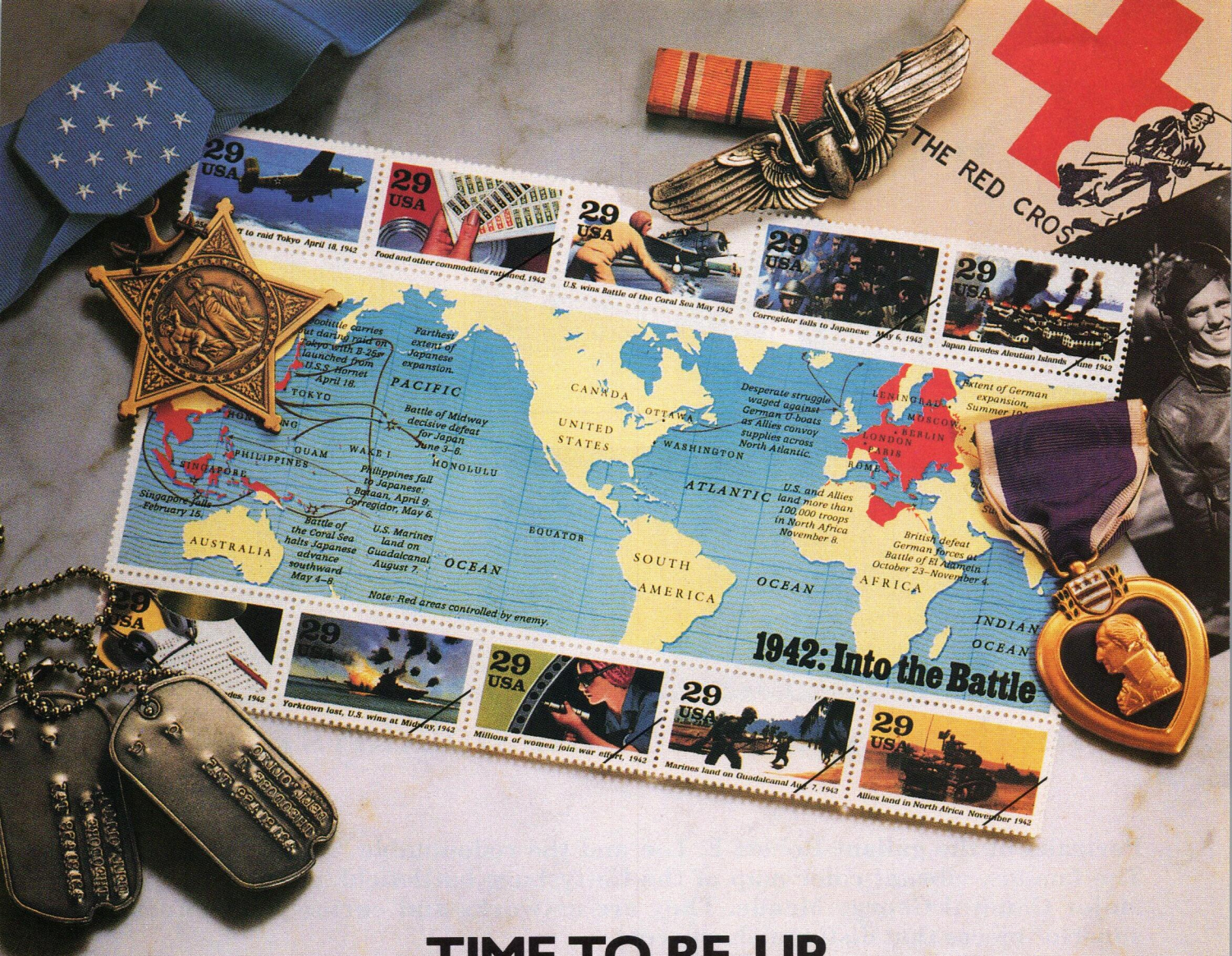
As part of its statehood bicentennial celebration, the Kentucky Historical Society in Frankfort hosts an exhibition until March 1993 that demonstrates "Kentucky history isn't all just Daniel Boone and Abe Lincoln." Focusing on five topics—the coal industry, tobacco farming, public health, civil rights, and the handicrafts revival—the display explores the changes of the last century and places them in a national context. Visitors walk through a simulated coal tunnel, hear the sounds of a tobacco auction, and view film footage of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s 1967 march on Louisville. For more information telephone 502-564-3016.

Meet Your Neighbors: Portraits, Painters, and Society, 1790-1850

Until January 3, 1993 Old Sturbridge Village in Massachusetts displays ninety early nineteenth-century portraits gathered from museums, private collections, and its own holdings that represent a unique era in the history of portraiture, when painted likenesses became available to a broader range of Americans than at any time before or since. The exhibit's three thematic sections include "The Age of Mass Portraiture," which tells the story of the portrait painters, some of whom were itinerant artists;



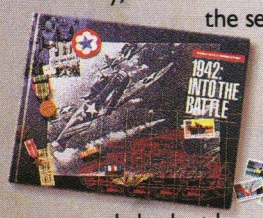
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The American and British Foot Soldier, 1775-1785

Through 1992 the Yorktown Victory Center in Virginia illustrates the experiences of American and British soldiers during the Revolutionary War with a variety of period graphics, documents, and artifacts that include training manuals, muskets, musical instruments, a 1770 document box, eating and cooking implements, and a certificate from the Society of the Cincinnati. The themes highlighted include recruitment practices, training, discipline, military music, weapons and equipment, uniforms, rations, pay, personal effects, the roles of women, and the fate of veterans. For more information telephone 804-253-4138.



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The Real McCoy: African-American Invention and Innovation

This exhibition, showing at the California Afro-American Museum in Los Angeles until October 27, celebrates black inventors who made important contributions to the development of American technology despite the barriers created by social injustice and oppression. Organized by the Smithsonian Institution, the show derives its title from Elijah McCoy (1843-1929), whose nearly fifty patented inventions included a locomotive lubricating device said to have become so important to railroad engineers that they insisted on the "real McCoy" instead of imitations. Other representative inventors include Norbert Rillieux (1806-94), a New Orleans engineer noted for his vacuum evaporation system for processing sugar, and Jan Matzeliger (1852-89), who revolutionized the footwear industry with a machine to mold the tops of shoes, increasing production more than seven-fold. For more information telephone 213-744-7432.

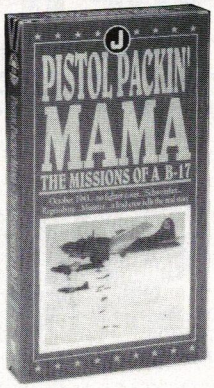
Age of Exploration

Scientific and technological developments in shipbuilding, ocean navigation, and cartography that led to fifteenth- through seventeenth-century voyages of exploration are the focus of a new permanent exhibition at the Mariners' Museum in Newport News, Virginia. Displays that include ship models, rare books, illustrations, maps, navigational instruments, shipbuilding tools, and other maritime artifacts tell the stories of the pre-Columbian voyages by St. Brendan, the Norse, and the Pacific Islanders; highlight such early explorers as Leif Eiriksson, Christopher Columbus, and Ferdinand Magellan; trace the development of cartography and explain the tools and techniques used by early navigators; chronicle the evolution of oceangoing ships such as the caravel and galleon; focus on the establishment of trade and a system of forts erected to protect trade goods and routes; and detail the eighteenth-century scientific expeditions that systematically explored and charted the Pacific Ocean. For more information telephone 804-595-0368.

Anthracite People: Immigration and Ethnicity in Pennsylvania's Coal Region

With this permanent exhibit, the Pennsylvania Anthracite Heritage Museum in Scranton broadens its scope beyond the story of coal, the mining industry, and mining technology to include the men, women, and children from more than two dozen nations who settled the coal fields of northwestern Pennsylvania. Blending the museum's rich collection of oral

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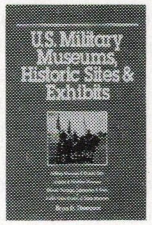
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histories with photographs and artifacts, the display highlights the reasons people came to the anthracite region; the types of work they found there, how they felt about their jobs, and the impact those jobs had on their lives; the roles of women and children; and the culture of the region. For more information telephone 717-963-4804/4845.

Ties That Bind: Communities in American History

An exhibition of documents, manuscripts, and photographs in the Rotunda of the National Archives building in Washington, D.C. testifies to the varied communities into which Americans have separated themselves within the larger national community. The display, which runs until February 1993, examines the forces that have engendered patterns of association—such as common ethnicity, economic status, or philosophy—and the diversity of communities that these forces have spawned. Among the artifacts are an 1834 bill drafted by Congress requesting land on which to establish "a second Poland where our Countrymen . . . may congregate and prosper"; a patent request for a "chair tilting device" submitted by members of the Shaker community; and identification tags given to residents of the San Carlos Indian Agency to indicate their eligibility for government rations. For more information telephone 202-501-5525.

Alice Austin Goes to the Fair: The World's Columbian Exposition

One of the most spectacular world's fairs of all time, Chicago's Columbian Exposition was held in 1893 to mark the four-hundredth anniversary of Christopher Columbus's first voyage to the Americas. Among the more than twenty million visitors to the fair (held a year late due to construction delays) was Alice Austin (1866-1952), now recognized as one of the most important woman photographers of the era. This exhibition at the Alice Austin House Museum on Staten Island, New York until January 3, 1993 includes Austin photographs documenting such exposition wonders as a Liberty Bell made of California oranges; the world's first

Ferris wheel; Alaskan totem poles; and a commemorative statue of Columbus. Also on view are 150 examples of Columbian Exposition memorabilia from the collection of Stephen Sheppard. For more information telephone 718-816-4506.

"Discovering America"

An exhibition at the Jamestown Settlement in Virginia allows visitors to ponder the legitimacy of the numerous "discoveries" of North America that may have taken place between about 14,000 B.C.—when the continent's first inhabitants are thought to have crossed the land bridge from Asia—and Christopher Columbus's 1492 arrival in the West Indies. Legends, stories, and accounts of Irish, Welsh, Celto-Iberian, Norse, Japanese, Chinese, African, Egyptian, Phoenician, Roman, and Hebrew explorers who allegedly ventured across the Atlantic and Pacific oceans to the Americas are presented along with such artifacts as fourth-century A.D. Roman coins said to have come from the wreck of a Roman ship off the coast of Massachusetts; a stone purportedly inscribed with Minoan lettering, discovered in Georgia in the 1970s; a bronze Celtic dagger found in Massachusetts; a Mandan boat similar to ancient Welsh coracles; and Equadorean pottery shards similar in design to Japanese ceramics of the Jomon period (circa 3000 B.C.). The exhibition will continue until March 15, 1993. For more information telephone 804-253-4138.

Pacific Voyages of Exploration: Prints from the Age of Enlightenment and Discovery

This exhibition at the Peabody Museum in Salem, Massachusetts focuses on seven voyages of discovery across the length and breadth of the Pacific Ocean during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries by explorers James Cook, Otto von Kotzebue, Jean-François de Galaup comte de La Pérouse, and Jules-Sébastien-César Dumont d'Urville. The display includes original paintings and sketches by expedition artists as well as engravings and lithographs made from such renderings to satisfy a curious public. For more information telephone 508-745-1876. ★



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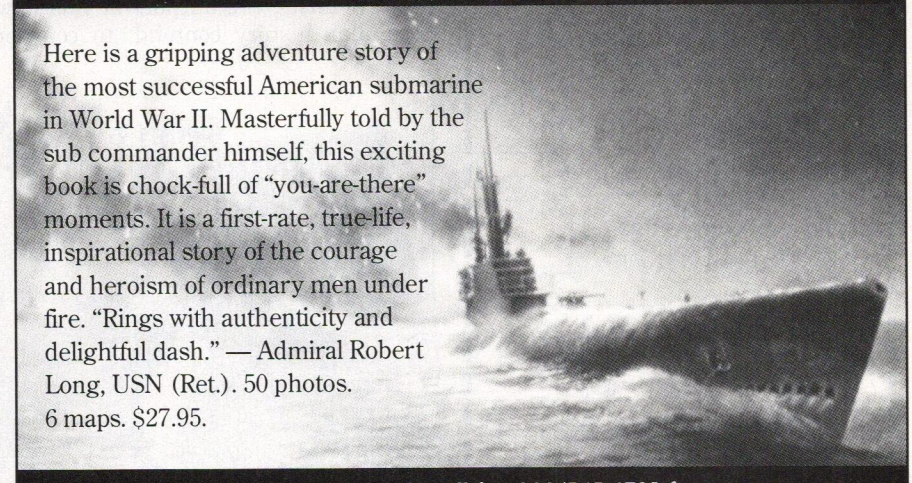
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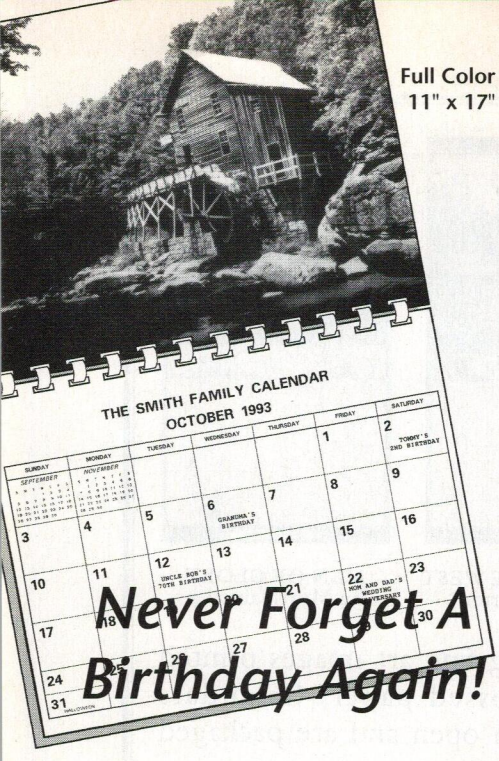
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The White House: The History of an American Idea

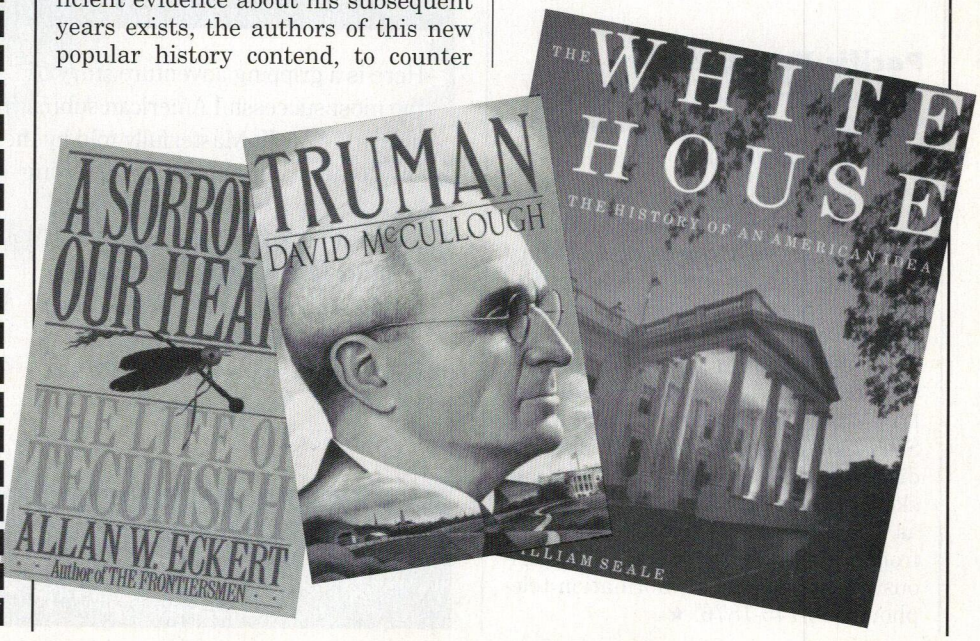
In this authoritative large-format history of the White House, enhanced by nearly four hundred photographs and drawings, William Seale presents his subject more as a "cultural artifact than a work of architecture." Seale chronicles the mansion's history from the 1790 passage of the Residence Act that called for construction of a presidential dwelling, its design by Irish-born architect James Hoban (c. 1762-1831), and the laying of its cornerstone in 1792 through the numerous—and often substantial—alterations and restorations undertaken by succeeding presidents. "Had the White House been built whole and left that way," the author notes, "it would be less an idea than a venerable piece of architecture. . . . Excellence of design, however, is not the issue with the White House. Ideas put it up, and ideas have shaped it year by year, until the house itself is a unique and uniquely American place for the presidency."
By William Seale (American Institute of Architects Press, Washington, D.C., 1992; 336 pages, illustrated, $55.00).

The Worlds of Christopher Columbus

Although details of Christopher Columbus's early life remain sketchy, sufficient evidence about his subsequent years exists, the authors of this new popular history contend, to counter the misconceptions that variously have led to exaltation or condemnation of the explorer. William D. Phillips, Jr. and Carla Rahn Phillips here examine the best evidence available to present a balanced view of the man, his accomplishments, and his failings. "Columbus was clearly well positioned for the role that history assigned him," they conclude. "Experienced with trade and with the sea, widely read in the cosmography of the day, and fortuitously given the opportunity to benefit from the best contemporary geographical knowledge, he was the right man in the right place at the right time. That, and his strength of character and perseverance, justly earned him the fame that he still enjoys, five hundred years after his first historic voyage."
William D. Phillips, Jr. and Carla Rahn Phillips (Cambridge University Press, New York City, 1992; 322 pages, illustrated, $27.95).

Travel Guide to Europe 1492: Ten Itineraries in the Old World

Italian historian Lorenzo Camusso's handsomely illustrated work offers a "travel guide" to Europe during the decades that immediately preceded and followed Christopher Columbus's 1492 voyage to the Americas. This Baedeker to the continent and cul-



tures that gave rise to the Age of Exploration, the preface states, is "an attempt to plunge the traveler back into the past, not merely to show him a backdrop." An introductory section reviews the usual means of travel in fifteenth-century Europe, describing typical road conditions, food, attractions, and accommodations. It then provides the time-traveler with itineraries for ten adventurous trips through the Old World, with vivid accounts of what each journey might have been like, from the sights and sounds to the pleasures and perils.
By Lorenzo Camusso (Henry Holt and Company, New York City, 1992; 288 pages, illustrated, $35.00 paper).

In Search of Columbus

British author Hunter Davies combines research into the wealth of surviving primary material concerning the life and accomplishments of Christopher Columbus with personal travel to sites associated with the explorer to produce essentially two books in one. In alternating chapters, Davies provides biographical information on Columbus and accounts of his own visits to Genoa, Portugal, Spain, the Bahamas, Haiti, Venezuela, Jamaica, and the Dominican Republic.
By Hunter Davies (Sinclair-Stevenson, London, distributed by Trafalgar Square Books, North Pomfret, Vermont, 1991; 308 pages, illustrated, $29.95).

Truman

In this massive biography of Harry S. Truman (1884-1972), noted historian David McCullough observes that the quiet family man from Missouri "was the kind of president the founding fathers had in mind for the country. He came directly from the people. He *was* America." To construct this exhaustive picture of the nation's thirty-third president, McCullough drew on the resources of the Truman Library in Independence, Missouri; extensive interviews with many of Truman's family, friends, and colleagues; and newly-discovered archival material. The only president to have served in World War I, Truman entered politics in association with Kansas City's powerful Pendergast machine, won election to the U.S. Senate, and was selected in 1944 by Franklin D. Roosevelt as his vice-presidential running-mate. When Roosevelt died in April 1945, many feared that the unpresupposing Truman would pale in comparison with his predecessor. However, Truman's terms of office—highlighted by his remarkable 1948 come-from-behind election victory over Thomas E. Dewey—became known for some of the century's most important presidential decisions, including dropping the atomic bomb on Japan to end World War II; proclamation of the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan; immediate recognition of the state of Israel; desegregation of the armed forces; and American intervention in Korea under United Nations auspices.
By David McCullough (Simon & Schuster, New York City, 1992; 1,117 pages, illustrated, $30.00).

Eyewitness to World War II

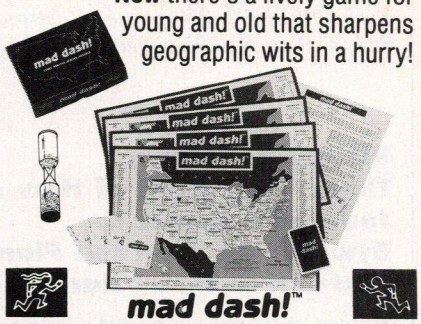
Military historian Stephen W. Sears culled the eighteen eyewitness accounts of World War II events in this volume from past issues of *American Heritage*, a national history magazine published since 1954. Part of a "Best of American Heritage" series that also includes *The Civil War* and *World War II*, this volume includes former submarine skipper Edward Beach's recollections of what it was like to be sent into hostile waters with defective torpedoes; Charles Cawthon's account of the 1944 Normandy landing; General James M. Gavin's memoir of the 1944 battle of Huertgen Forest; and the painful reminiscences of G.D. Lillibridge, a survivor of the intense and bloody 1943 contest for the tiny Pacific island of Betio in the Tarawa Atoll.
Edited by Stephen W. Sears (Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston, 1991; 308 pages, $19.95).

The World Almanac of Presidential Campaigns

In this timely book (illustrated with caricatures by Pulitzer Prize-winning political cartoonist Jeff MacNelly) journalist Eileen Shields-West looks at American presidential campaigns from George Washington's unanimous selection in 1789 to the George Bush-Michael Dukakis race two centuries later. Summarizing each campaign and its outcome, Shields-West provides the presidential candidates' credentials; their political affiliations; campaign features such as slogans, songs, nicknames, and para-

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phernalia; and notable trends, benchmarks, and firsts.
By Eileen Shields-West; illustrated by Jeff MacNelly (World Almanac, New York City, 1992; 250 pages, illustrated, $21.95 cloth, $10.95 paper).

Visions of Infamy: The Untold Story of How Journalist Hector C. Bywater Devised the Plans that Led to Pearl Harbor

Sixteen years before the 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Hector C. Bywater, a British journalist who long had been fascinated with the Japanese Navy, published *The Great Pacific War*, a fictional account of a conflict between the U.S. and Japan in which the latter launched a surprise assault on the American fleet in Hawaii; seized the Philippines and Guam; and in the end was defeated after an American island-hopping campaign. In his biography of Bywater, William H. Honan builds a strong case that Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto adopted Bywater's hypothetical military strategies and possibly might have been implicated in the writer's sudden 1940 death. As a companion volume to Honan's book, St. Martin's Press has simultaneously released a new edition of Bywater's prophetic work (321 pages, $22.95).
By William H. Honan (St. Martin's Press, New York City, 1991; 346 pages, illustrated, $22.95).

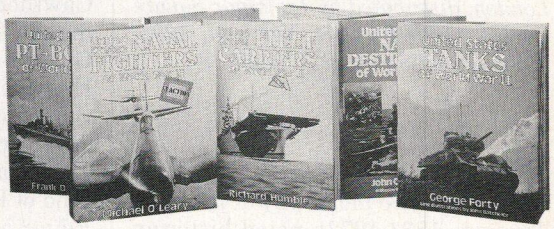
Silent Wings at War: Combat Gliders in World War II

One of the lesser-known chapters of World War II history—the use of gliders to carry troops, equipment, and supplies into battle—is documented in this narrative by John L. Lowden, himself a glider pilot in the European theater. Weaving his own often hair-raising experiences and those of thirty-nine other veterans into the narrative, Lowden chronicles the use of Allied gliders in seven major airborne assaults. Towed behind C-47 cargo aircraft, the plywood and canvas gliders (the standard American version carried a pilot, copilot, and thirteen combat-equipped troops) were sometimes cut loose at night far behind enemy lines; on other occasions crews had to brave devastating anti-aircraft fire in daylight landings. Chaos and tragedy frequently resulted as gliders plunged to earth or piled up among the hedgerows and ditches of the European countryside. This book pays belated tribute to the courageous men who piloted and rode these powerless aircraft in some of the riskiest missions of the war.
By John L. Lowden (Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, D.C., 1992; 186 pages, illustrated, $24.95).

A Sorrow in Our Heart: The Life of Tecumseh

This heavily annotated narrative biography of Tecumseh (1768-1813) represents thirty years of research by Allan W. Eckert, who sees the Shawnee leader as "one of the finer human beings in recorded history." In order to tell Tecumseh's story with the pace and excitement of a novel, Eckert combines the best elements of fiction with the accuracy required of a historical biography by "reconstituting" dialogue from the available source

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materials. Although Tecumseh never became a chief of the Shawnees, he long has been acknowledged as one of the foremost Native American leaders, who spent his life defending himself and his people against the westward-moving whites bent on taking native lands by treachery, war, and encroachment. Tecumseh dreamed of uniting all Native American tribes into one nation that would put aside all intertribal rivalries and drive back the white settlers. By the time he died while fighting with the British against the Americans in the War of 1812, Tecumseh very nearly had succeeded in that goal.

By Allan W. Eckert (Bantam Books, New York City, 1992; 862 pages, illustrated, $27.50).

War Plan Orange: The U.S. Strategy to Defeat Japan, 1897-1945

In various strategic plans that the U.S. Army and Navy developed prior to World War II, the world's nations were represented by assigned colors; the United States was "Blue" and Japan was "Orange." Edward S. Miller, in this book based on twenty years of research in formerly secret archives, examines "War Plan Orange," the Navy's prewar strategy in the event of hostilities between the United States and Japan. The author details the process used to develop and refine this "remarkably predictive" plan and demonstrates that it not only served as the basis for U.S. naval strategy during the prewar years but also was applied brilliantly, despite the shock of Pearl Harbor and previous upheavals in weapons and world politics, to guide the United States to victory in history's greatest war.

By Edward S. Miller (Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 1991; 509 pages, illustrated, $34.95).

The Cruel Peace: Everyday Life and the Cold War

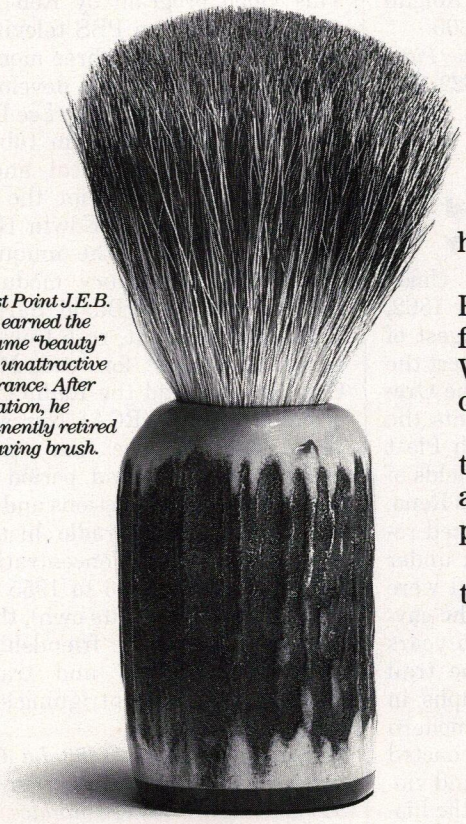
The Cold War—that politically defined era between World War II and the recent breakup of the Soviet Union—has been, according to English author Fred Inglis, "the supreme fiction of the epoch." Like much of this century, the author concludes, the Cold War turned out to be as much about the politics and political influence of the media as it was about genuine political issues. Within a generally chronological framework, Inglis recounts great events of the postwar years; presents biographical sketches of significant figures; and examines telling examples of the era's popular culture.

By Fred Inglis (Basic Books, New York City, 1991; 492 pages, $28.00).

The Harper Encyclopedia of Military Biography

America's outstanding military leaders are among the approximately three thousand entries in this compilation of worldwide military figures from ancient to modern times. Arranged alphabetically, most of the biographical entries include the major wars, battles, or campaigns in which the subjects participated; narratives of their lives; evaluations of their characters, abilities, and contributions; and brief bibliographies.

Edited by Trevor N. Dupuy, Curt Johnson, and David L. Bongard (HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., New York City, 1992; 834 pages, $65.00). ★



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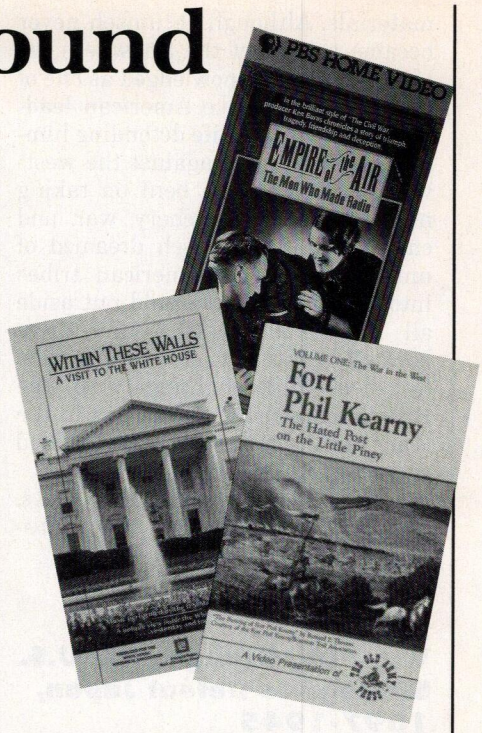
Sight & Sound

Within These Walls: A Visit to the White House

First Lady Barbara Bush, who introduces this video tour of the presidential mansion that has accommodated every chief executive except George Washington (who left office before it was finished), notes that the building known today simply as the "White House" is "truly a living museum, where history is made every day." Commemorating the bicentennial of the mansion's 1792 cornerstone-laying, the video details the rich history of the "President's House" and examines the uses to which the various rooms have been put; the wide assortment of decorating styles that periodically transformed those rooms; and the major restorations that have been necessary to prevent the structure from falling into ruin. The tour highlights many of the White House's magnificent furnishings and artworks, including Gilbert Stuart's portrait of George Washington, which hangs today in the East Room. Saved from destruction by Dolley Madison when the British burned the capital in 1814, this painting is the only object that has graced the White House continuously since John and Abigail Adams took up residence in 1800.
QED Enterprises, 4802 Fifth Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15213, 412-622-1307 (collect); VHS, 30 minutes, $19.95.

Phil Kearny: The Hated Post on the Little Piney

Named for a distinguished Union general who died in action in 1862, Fort Phil Kearny was the largest of three forts built in 1866 to protect the Bozeman Trail, a branch of the Oregon Trail that offered emigrants the shortest route from the North Platt River in Colorado to the gold fields of Montana. Construction of Forts Reno, C.F. Smith, and Kearny inflamed relations with the Oglala Sioux under Chief Red Cloud; so successful were the natives in their raids on the cavalry posts that after only two years the forts were closed and the trail abandoned. Historic photographs in this video, together with modern footage that includes re-enacted scenes of Fort Kearny's short and violent career, offer viewers both the historical background of the isolated Wyoming outpost and an overview of what visitors can find there today.
Old Army Press, P.O. Box 2243, Fort Collins, Colorado 80522, 800-627-0079; VHS, 30 minutes, $30.00.



Empire of the Air: The Men Who Made Radio

This video program by Ken Burns, originally aired on PBS television in January, documents three men of genius who pioneered the development of radio and broadcasting. Lee De Forest invented the vacuum tube that made reception practical and provided the foundation for the entire electronics industry; Edwin Howard Armstrong created the unique system of FM (frequency modulation) broadcasting; and David Sarnoff, a Russian immigrant, rose from delivering telegrams for the Marconi Company to head the Radio Corporation of America (RCA). Narrated by Jason Robards, the film combines archival material and period newsreels with the recollections and observations of notable radio historians and personalities. Concentrating on the period from 1906 to 1955 (when television came into its own), the documentary traces the friendships, rivalries, deceptions, and tragedies that are part of the intriguing story of radio's heyday.
Pacific Arts Video, 11858 La Grange Avenue, Los Angeles, California 90025, 800-333-0041; VHS, 120 minutes, $19.95 plus $4.50 shipping. ★



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Voyage of Destiny

by William D. Phillips, Jr., and Carla Rahn Phillips



In the predawn twilight of Friday, August 3, 1492, three small ships left the Andalusian port of Palos, sailing down the Tinto River and into the tranquil Atlantic. For Genoa-born Christopher Columbus, captain-general of the tiny Spanish fleet, this departure must have been a time of mixed emotions. Behind him finally lay the frustrations, reverses, and humiliations of a decade-long struggle to obtain royal patronage for his vision of reaching Asia, not by navigating east around Africa but by boldly sailing west. Ahead of him—despite the mariner's stubborn faith in his soon-to-be-tested theory—loomed the daunting challenge of navigating unknown seas. What Columbus could not know was that he was doomed to fail completely in his attempt to reach the Indies—but nevertheless was embarking on perhaps the most significant voyage in history.

OPPOSITE: "DEPARTURE OF COLUMBUS FROM THE PORT OF PALOS" BY JOAQUIN SOROLLA Y BASTIDA (1910-11); COURTESY OF THE MARINERS' MUSEUM, NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA.
ABOVE: "SANTA MARÍA, NIÑA, AND PINTA" BY EDWARD MORAN; COURTESY OF THE U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY MUSEUM, ANNAPOLIS.

As far as is known, no portraits of the world's most famous explorer survive from his own lifetime, but several contemporaries of Christopher Columbus left word-pictures of him. The earliest description, printed in 1504, said that Columbus was "Genoese, a man of tall and imposing stature, ruddy, of great intelligence, and with a long face." According to sixteenth-century historian Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, the mariner was "taller than middling and with strong limbs, the eyes lively and the other parts of the countenance of good proportion, the hair very red and the face somewhat flushed and freckled." Bartolomé de Las Casas added that Columbus's "beard and hair, when he was a youth, [was] fair, but . . . soon became gray with his troubles." Other accounts provide us with the image of a complex, driven man who was "continent and modest" in his personal habits, was deeply religious, and had great strength of character and perseverance—but who also could be dogmatic and imperious. Two of dozens of posthumous portraits of Columbus appear opposite: the pensive view at top probably dates from the early sixteenth century; the more regal interpretation below, painted by Sebastino del Plombo, was completed in 1519.

Looking back today, it almost seems as if all of the circumstances of Christopher Columbus's background, as well as his forty years of life experiences, had combined fortuitously to prepare him for the pivotal role in history he was about to assume. Born in Genoa in 1451, he spent his formative years amid a flourishing commercial community with centuries-old ties to the eastern Mediterranean and the trans-Asian caravan trade. Since the days of Marco Polo—the thirteenth-century Venetian traveler who lived at the court of the Mongol Khan—the fabled wealth of Asia had formed a powerful lure for Italian merchants. The spices and luxurious textiles of Asia retained their appeal even as direct trade dwindled, the victim of disruptions caused by the Black Death and the disintegration of the Mongol empire.

Subsequent Middle Eastern developments also influenced the shaping of Columbus's life and world view. In the scramble for power that followed the eclipse of the Mongols, the Ottoman Turks emerged as a growing force. In 1453 they captured Constantinople, dealing Genoa a terrific blow by threatening to squeeze Christian merchants out of trade with the Black Sea ports. Although few details are known about Columbus's early years, he must have been keenly aware of Muslim dominance in the eastern Mediterranean. His later writings suggest that he was especially troubled by Islamic control of the Christian holy places in the Middle East.

In response to these new pressures from the east, many Genoese shifted their commerce to the western Mediterranean and the Atlantic coast of Africa. During his youth Columbus worked for several such merchants, sailing throughout the Mediterranean and learning both the commercial and the nautical skills that would distinguish his adult years.

Sometime in the mid-1470s, Columbus arrived in Portugal, which had moved to the forefront of European nations in maritime exploration. There he further honed his skills as a merchant and navigator, gaining valuable firsthand knowledge about the currents, winds, islands, and shorelines of the ocean sea. His voyages may have taken him as far north as Ireland and England (possibly even Iceland); and definitely carried him as far west as the Madeira Islands and as far south as Africa's Gold Coast.

During his Lisbon years Columbus married Felipa Moniz, a member of a noble family with some wealth, whose late father had colonized one of the Madeira Islands. From this union, which ended with the early death of Felipa, Columbus gained a son, Diego, born in 1480; valuable family connections with the Portuguese and possibly the Spanish royal courts; a growing thirst for wealth, status, and power; and charts and papers accumulated by his wife's father—that presumably contained useful information about the Atlantic currents and winds.

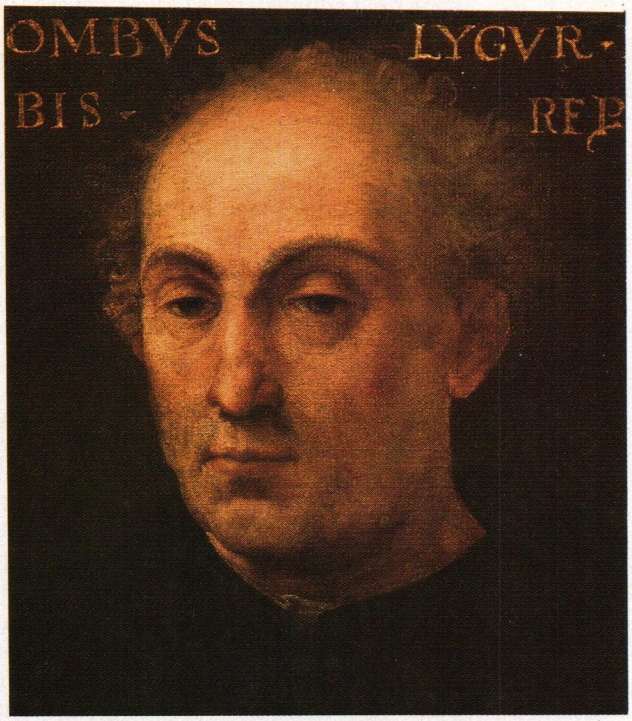
Like many of his contemporary merchant-mariners, Columbus began thinking about how to outflank the Muslims and reach Asia by a route that avoided the Middle East. Direct access to the markets of Asia not only would be enormously profitable, but the profits also could be used for the benefit of Christianity, combating the Muslims in North Africa and the Middle East.

The most likely sea route to Asia lay toward the south and east, circumnavigating Africa. But Columbus came to believe in a much more daring scheme. During his decade of living in and sailing out of Portugal and the Madeira Islands, his grand design for reaching the East by sailing west germinated and gradually evolved into coherent form.

The precise steps in the formulation of Columbus's grand design remain unknown, but it seems likely that he first became intrigued by legends and stories of islands in the ocean west of Portugal. Within recent memory, Portuguese adventurers had discovered and settled the Madeiras and the Azores, and their Castilian counterparts were in the process of conquering and settling the Canaries. Columbus and many others believed that there were more islands still to be found, some of them undoubtedly within the Asian trading sphere. Maps from Columbus's time generally showed the western ocean strewn with islands, with Japan (Cipango) the largest among them, and the mainland of China (Cathay) and India lying beyond. Perhaps Asia was not as far away as many learned geographers believed. Perhaps it could be reached by determinedly sailing west.

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As this idea took hold in Columbus's mind, he consulted an array of scholarly books from his own time as well as from the ancient world. These volumes all assumed the earth was a sphere; educated people had known that since ancient times. All that remained in doubt was the total circumference of the globe and the relative extent of the water and land that covered it. Columbus had a fairly wide range of opinions to choose from, but the highest (and, as we know today, most accurate) estimates suggested that Asia lay much too far from Europe to make a westward sailing possible. Not surprisingly, Columbus favored the lower end of the range of estimates. He also accepted the opinion of some scholars that Asia extended much farther east than it actually does, and that Japan lay some 1,500 miles off the Asian coast. In other words, Columbus selectively studied the evidence available to him, choosing opinions and estimates of distance that made his plan feasible. He was wrong, of course. Had he known how far Japan and the Asian mainland really lay from Europe, he might never have pursued his grand design.*



IN QUEST OF A PATRON

In 1483 or 1484, with at least the basic elements of his plan formulated, Columbus tried to interest Portugal's King João II in financing an expedition to Asia. In doing so, he characteristically sought not only backing but also the status and power that such royal favor would bring. Columbus had reason to anticipate a sympathetic hearing; the Portuguese ruling house (most notably Prince Henry—later called the "Navigator") had fostered exploration in the Atlantic for generations, to its great profit.

Columbus probably requested several ships, as well as provisions. He also may have made the same demands that he later would make in Spain: to be ennobled; to be



*Columbus calculated the length of a degree along the earth's equator to be 56.66 Roman *millas*—approximately 51-52 modern statute miles. This distance, multiplied by 360 degrees, provided a circumference of less than 19,000 statute miles. The actual circumference of the earth is about 24,900 statute miles—more than 30 percent larger than Columbus's estimate. On the basis of these figures, combined with his exaggerated sense of how far east the Asian coast and the island of Japan lay, Columbus estimated that Japan was about 2,700 statute miles west of the Canary Islands. The real distance between these points is more than 12,000 statute miles.

TOP: PORTRAIT OF COLUMBUS ATTRIBUTED TO THE COLLECTION OF PAOLO GIOVIO; COURTESY OF THE CIVICO MUSEO GIOVIO, COMO, ITALY.
BOTTOM: "PORTRAIT OF A MAN, CALLED CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS"; COURTESY OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, GIFT OF J. PIERPONT MORGAN.

appointed admiral, viceroy, and governor of any lands he discovered; and to be granted a share of all the profits on trade established with those lands.

Perhaps Columbus asked too much. Perhaps the king's advisors cast doubt on Columbus's ideas, as well they should. Perhaps the king was not willing to trust a foreigner to do his bidding, particularly one with the self-confidence and even arrogance that Columbus seems to have displayed at court. Whatever Columbus's demands, João II refused to support him.

Soon after being turned down, Columbus left Lisbon for Spain, taking his young son Diego with him. If the Portuguese would not back him, perhaps their Spanish rivals would. Early in 1485 Christopher and Diego arrived at Palos de la Frontera on the southwestern coast of Andalusia.

According to tradition, the mariner and his son sought lodging at the Franciscan friary of La Rábida, three miles from Palos, high on the cliffs overlooking the Tinto River. Columbus may or may not actually have visited the picturesque monastery in 1485; in any event both Palos and La Rábida later would loom significantly in his Asian enterprise. A sister of Columbus's late wife lived in Huelva, across the Tinto River from Palos; contacting his in-laws, the widower arranged for them to care for his son while he sought audience with the Spanish royal court.

Soon thereafter, Columbus consulted, either by chance or through the arrangements of mutual friends, the Franciscan friar Antonio de Marchena. Marchena was ideally placed to help him. The priest had powerful friends in the court of Queen Isabel of Castile and her husband King Fernando of Aragón, and he was rising in the Franciscan hierarchy. He also was an astronomer who studied the same heavens that guided mariners.

The secretive Columbus, who never revealed all he knew to anyone, nevertheless evidently disclosed enough about his scheme to Marchena to convert the knowledgeable friar into his most faithful advocate. When Columbus left Palos for the royal court in the spring or summer of 1485, he perhaps bore with him Marchena's letter of introduction to Friar Hernando de Talavera, prior of the Prado Monastery and confessor to Queen Isabel.

Joining the court in Córdoba, Columbus gained access to various persons of influence in addition to Talavera, and he soon presented a written petition addressed to the Spanish monarchs. Before the petition could reach the king and queen, however, it had to be considered by the royal council, which summoned Columbus to explain his project. No more impressed by the Genoan's flawed geographical assumptions than the Portuguese experts had



been, the council rejected his petition. Undeterred, Columbus then made an appeal to the monarchs for a personal audience, either directly or through the contacts he cultivated at court.

In October Fernando, Isabel, and their entourage moved from Córdoba to central Castile and established residence northeast of Madrid.* Columbus soon followed, and the monarchs probably granted him his first audience in January 1486.

No direct record of Columbus's audience with Fernando and Isabel has surfaced, but there are indirect reports of what transpired. According to one chronicler, Columbus used a map of the world—possibly one that he had drawn himself—to illustrate his scheme for reaching Asia by sailing west across the Atlantic. It is also likely that he quoted frequently and extensively from the second-century astronomer Ptolemy's *Geographia* to buttress his interpretation of world geography; later in 1486 King Fernando purchased a copy of that authoritative work.

Fernando and Isabel were impressed enough with Columbus's arguments to appoint a special *junta* (commission) to assess the proposal. Heading it was the able and experienced courtier Hernando de Talavera, who had handled difficult matters for his sovereigns in the past. His associates on the commission included *letrados* (university-educated members of the royal court, mostly lawyers); *sabios* (men learned in astronomy and cartography); and mariners.

We do not know in detail the deliberations of this *junta*, but at some point Columbus displayed a map of the world and seems to have promised that he would find land within 750 leagues (2,700-2,800 modern statute miles) across the ocean sea from Spain. Whatever arguments Columbus put forth, the commission rejected them totally during its meetings between November 1486 and January 1487.

Despite the discouraging report of their commission, the Spanish monarchs were unwilling to dismiss Columbus out of hand. One obvious reason had to do with economics. The riches of Asia, unquestioned by those who had read *The Travels of Marco Polo*, were attractive in themselves. For Castile in the 1480s they were particularly appealing as possible substitutes for African gold.

Direct Spanish access to West Africa's gold markets, as well as to an eastern trade route to India around Africa, had been prohibited by the terms of agreements that ended five years of war with Portugal in 1479. Castile nevertheless continued to receive an indirect supply of African gold in the form of tribute from the kingdom of Granada on the south coast of the Iberian peninsula. When Columbus first came before Fernando and Isabel in 1486, they were engaged in (and much preoccupied with) a war against this last Muslim outpost in western Europe. They foresaw that their impending conquest of Granada would end the tribute payments. If Columbus's theory proved to be correct and he succeeded in establishing a western sea route to Asia, the resulting trade might compensate for Castile's loss of African wealth and exclusion from the still-hypothetical route around Africa to India.

Beyond economic concerns, Columbus's scheme dovetailed neatly with western European religious ideals of reconquest and unification. If Castile could drive the Muslims from Spain after seven centuries, perhaps anything was possible—even the end of Islam altogether. In addition to producing great riches, an established sea route to Asia might lead to an alliance with the Great Khan against the Muslims and an unprecedented opportunity to spread the Christian message. Columbus's enterprise had the potential to tie together and accomplish the millenarian dreams that European merchants, monarchs, missionaries, and mystics had held since the end of the Crusades.

Whatever their motivations, Fernando and Isabel began authorizing grants to Columbus for living expenses and for travel to and from the court. Their first grant, for 3,000 maravedis, was made in May 1487 while the court was in Córdoba. A second stipend for an equal amount followed in July. In August, Christian forces recaptured the Granadan city of Málaga, and Fernando and Isabel summoned Columbus to attend them at the royal encampment outside the city, sending him 4,000 maravedis for the journey. Considering that a ship's pilot earned about 2,000 maravedis a month, these were generous subsidies.

*Castile would have no permanent capital city until the mid-sixteenth century. The monarchy, like most others in western Europe, was an amalgam of previously independent kingdoms and counties, and the rulers found it useful to move around, making their presence known and felt in the principal cities of their realm.

No better example of the world as Columbus envisioned it can be found than in the remarkable terrestrial globe (opposite) created by Nuremberg cartographer Martin Behaim in 1492. Although Columbus and Behaim apparently had no contact with one another, their conceptions of the world, each stemming from the academic geography available at the end of the fifteenth century, agreed almost entirely. In this close-up of Behaim's globe, only islands separate Europe (at far right) from Asia (far left). Cipango (Japan), the largest of the islands depicted, lies far off the Asian mainland. Like Columbus, Behaim grossly underestimated the actual circumference of the earth as well as the distance from Europe to Asia when sailing west.

GLOBE AND PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE BIBLIOTHEQUE NATIONALE, PARIS.



The monarchs' main concern at this time was to end the conflict with Granada victoriously, and they were engaged in complicated diplomatic maneuvers to that end as well as in pursuing the war itself. Despite these pressures, they and their officials were careful to keep Columbus's hopes alive, effectively preventing him from taking his project elsewhere until they had the time and money to deal with it. Although refusing to commit any resources to his scheme while the war continued, they offered him the possibility of support once hostilities ceased.

Columbus applied for support several more times, and the monarchs not only treated him courteously but gave him additional grants. Neither totally rejected nor fully supported, he remained in a kind of limbo for more than four years, his frustration growing as the months passed.

During these years Columbus spent a great deal of time in Córdoba to be near the queen, who frequently used that city as a base from which to follow developments in the war with Granada. While there, he established a romantic liaison with a young woman—an orphan in her cousin's care—named Beatriz Enríquez de Arana. Late in 1487 they conceived a child, who was born in August 1488 and given the name Hernando.

Hernando was a natural son, born to parents who had no impediment to marrying if they so wished. Yet they never married. The reason is not clear, but we can assume it related to Columbus's lofty ambitions. Marriage to a low-born orphan would do nothing to enhance his prestige and would surely impede his search for noble status. The stigma did not affect their son, however, nor discourage Columbus from providing for Beatriz financially, though they did not even live together regularly.

The scant information we have concerning Columbus's employment during these years comes from contemporary authors. The historian Bartolomé de Las Casas claimed that the Genoese mariner supported himself by making and selling navigational charts. The court chronicler Andrés Bernáldez said that Columbus sold books, conducting much of this business from Seville. Printing with the recently introduced technology of movable type was spreading rapidly through Europe, and Seville at that time was the most important center for Spanish book production as well

KING FERNANDO AND QUEEN ISABEL OF SPAIN, FROM A RARE CONTEMPORARY ENGRAVING; THE BETTMANN ARCHIVE, NEW YORK CITY.

as being a distribution center for works imported from Italy.

Columbus's major preoccupation during the late 1480s, of course, was to secure funding for his enterprise. Meanwhile, events in Portugal soon intensified the pressure. King João II, increasingly concerned with exploration and discovery, dispatched naval expeditions both to the west and the south. The most important of these was the 1487 departure of Portuguese navigator Bartolomeu Dias, who set out to find the southern tip of Africa and, by extension, the Indian Ocean and the long-sought sea route to Asia.

Surprisingly, in 1488 João II turned his attention at least briefly back to Columbus. Whether because the Genoan had written him or on his own initiative, the Portuguese monarch wrote a cordial letter to Columbus, urging him to visit Lisbon and giving him a safe-conduct for the trip. Columbus's subsequent actions are not documented explicity, but it seems clear that he traveled to the Spanish court with his letter from the Portuguese king. Whoever he contacted there must have been impressed, for in June of that year Columbus received a subsidy of 3,000 maravedis. Nonetheless, he still seems to have accepted João II's invitation. In a marginal notation in one of his books, Columbus claims to have been present in Lisbon in December 1488 when Bartolomeu Dias returned from Africa with word of having reached the Cape of Good Hope.

Whether or not Columbus was in the Portuguese capital when Dias arrived there, he soon would have learned about the voyage—and the news easily might have plunged him into despair. Dias's discoveries meant that the Indian Ocean probably was not landlocked and that the long-sought passage to India was now only a matter for another Portuguese expedition to establish. Equally discouraging, Columbus's meeting with João II, if it took place at all, apparently came to naught.

Columbus's options seemed to be rapidly narrowing. He had failed twice in Portugal. He was getting nowhere with the Spanish monarchs. His brother Bartolomeo, who had traveled to England, was unable to interest King Henry VII in the enterprise. And with Portugal poised to open an eastward route to the Orient, time was running out.

Columbus apparently now set aside at least temporarily his dream of securing royal sponsorship and the exalted status and power that would accompany it. Desperate enough to consider other ways of obtaining the funds he needed, he approached in turn two noblemen of Seville—Enrique de Guzmán, duke of Medina Sidonia, and Luis de la Cerda, duke of Mecinaceli. Both men had strong interests in shipping and maritime trade, and either easily could have mounted an expedition on the small scale that Columbus had in mind.

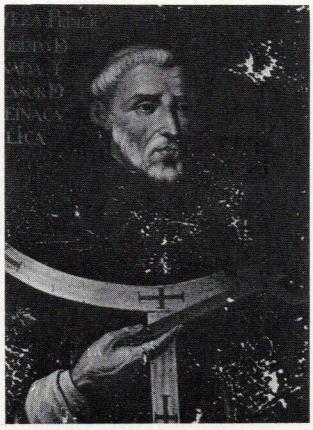
Guzmán, almost certainly aware that the royal commission had already turned down Columbus's plan, rejected his overtures. Cerda showed interest in backing the mariner, but when he sought royal permission to do so, Queen Isabel, almost as reluctant to relinquish Columbus's enterprise as she was to embrace it, discouraged the private venture.

By the fall of 1491 Columbus seems to have concluded that the Spanish monarchs never would support him. Of the western European monarchies, France alone now appeared to hold any promise. Returning to the southwest coast of Andalusia, Columbus expressed his intention to depart for France.

At this point fate took another of the dizzying turns that seem to have characterized Columbus's life. Arriving at the monastery of La Rábida near Palos, Columbus chanced to meet and become acquainted with the current warden, Juan Pérez, a former official of Queen Isabel. Intrigued by the mariner's story of his tribulations, Pérez called in a physician of Palos, a man of some scientific knowledge, to question Columbus about his theories, his proposals to Fernando and Isabel, and their many postponements. Columbus worked his charms as a salesman one more time, winning over both Pérez and the physician.

Pérez proved to be a powerful intermediary. He wrote to Queen Isabel requesting further reconsideration of Columbus's proposal and an audience for himself. She responded within two weeks, granting permission for a meeting. Traveling on a rented mule, Pérez joined the court at Real de Santa Fe, the royal military encampment outside the city of Granada. There he made a forceful argument in Columbus's favor.

Pérez's entreaty came at an opportune time. The Muslims just had signed an agreement promising to turn their Iberian kingdom over to the Spanish monarchs the next year; the end of the long Granadan



By the early 1480s, Columbus was convinced that a sea route to Asia could be established by determinedly sailing west across the Atlantic. Unable to interest Portugal's King João II in his plan, the mariner traveled to Spain in 1485, where he sought financial backing from Queen Isabel of Castile and King Fernando of Aragón (opposite). The royal couple referred Columbus's petition to a commission of learned men headed by Friar Hernando de Talavera (above); the junta rejected the proposal because of Columbus's clearly flawed geographical assumptions. But Fernando and Isabel, unwilling to pass up even an outside chance of gaining access to Asia's storied riches, chose not to dismiss Columbus outright. The persistent mariner continued his petitioning efforts for nearly seven years. After discouraging reverses, he finally achieved success in the spring of 1492, when the Castilian monarchs authorized funds for a three-ship expedition "to sail to certain parts of the ocean sea."

COURTESY OF THE PATRIMONIO NACIONAL, MADRID.

campaign was finally in sight. Isabel ordered Columbus to return to court, sending him the sizable sum of 20,000 maravedis to pay his expenses. Success seemed finally within the mariner's grasp.

But Columbus's agonizing string of reverses had not yet ended. After he reached Santa Fe his proposal underwent still another inquiry, conducted by a "council composed of the most eminent men" of the royal court, augmented by experts in law, astronomy, and navigation, and once again presided over by Hernando de Talavera. Disastrously for Columbus, the council confirmed the judgment of the earlier commission: his proposal did not impress a panel of experts.

The decison of the council, however well-founded, was the final blow. Resuming his interrupted journey to France, Columbus set out on the road for Córdoba. After nearly seven weary years of effort, he abandoned all hope of securing support in Spain and headed off to find it elsewhere.

Providentially, at this point King Fernando stepped in. Up to this time Queen Isabel had been in charge of the negotiations with Columbus, with her confessor Talavera coordinating most of the staff work. For reasons unstated in surviving documents, the king ordered Talavera and Friar Diego de Deza to see if something could be arranged after all. Years later, Fernando recalled his crucial action when he said, in 1508, "It was I [who was] the principal cause why those islands were discovered."

The queen finally was persuaded by Luis de Santángel, an Aragonese who was manager of the king's household accounts. Santángel's argument was eminently practical: backing Columbus would be a cheap gamble, with comparatively little risk for a potentially great reward. The opportunity should be seized; if not, Columbus would go to a foreign power, which would reap all the potential benefits if the venture paid off.

Isabel agreed and sent out a royal guard to find Columbus and escort him back to court. He was two leagues north, at the bridge of Pinos, when the rider reached him. He turned back toward Granada and into the pages of history.

PREPARATIONS

Columbus's joy might have been tempered had he realized that the royal couple had not necessarily been converted to his way of thinking. Instead, they were willing to risk a relatively small sum to keep any potential profit out of the hands of their rivals. One chronicler stated flatly that Columbus finally got his ships as a result of strong negotiating, not because the monarchs believed him. And Columbus's own son Diego later admitted that the rulers provided support despite their lack of faith that the venture would succeed.

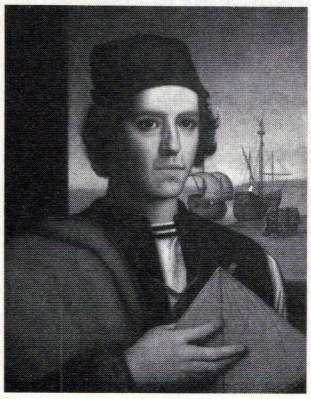
Meanwhile at court the talk turned to the question of where to find the funds to outfit the voyage. The royal treasury was dangerously drained. By 1493 Fernando and Isabel would have to pay more than 24 million maravedis to the Muslims for relinquishing Granada.

The biography of Columbus attributed to his son Hernando reports that Isabel offered to pawn her jewels for the expedition. If the queen actually made such an offer, it would not have been the first time she had raised money in that way. By 1491, some of her jewels already were pawned and had been for two years. Isabel still had others available, but pawning them turned out to be unnecessary. Santángel solved the dilemma by promising to find the money, which he did by shifting funds among various government bodies. Hernando de Talavera was joint treasurer of the Santa Hermandad, the national organization overseeing the rural militias of Castile; as its income passed into his control he used it to pay the expenses of preparing Columbus's small fleet. Later the Hermandad was reimbursed from other government funds. Deficit financing and fiscal maneuvering are not twentieth-century inventions.

With the funding secured, final details for the venture could be arranged. Columbus presented a proposal with his demands for compensation, and his contract with the crown was worked out in a series of negotiations held in the house of Isabel's secretary Fernando Alvarez. The final document that emerged, called the Capitulations of Santa Fe, followed a standard form of agreement in fifteenth-century Castile, with the specific points arranged in separate paragraphs or chapters (*capítulos*).

Through the Capitulations, signed on April 17, 1492 the crown granted Columbus impressive concessions. The monarchs agreed to give him noble status, together with the offices of admiral, viceroy, and governor-general in all of the islands and mainlands that he might claim for Castile. These royal gifts would become effective only after the discoveries and claims were made.

Preparations for Columbus's expedition centered in Palos, a small port on the Andalusian coast. Martín Alonso Pinzón (opposite), a respected local shipowner and mariner, proved to be a key figure in the ultimate success of the enterprise. Only after Pinzón gave Columbus his endorsement did previously reluctant local seaman sign on for the voyage into unknown waters. Pinzón served as captain of one of the two caravels the town supplied for the expedition, and a younger brother, Vicente Yáñez (below), commanded the other. Later, when restive sailors demanded that the ships turn back, the two captains provided vital support for Columbus.



PAINTING BY JULIO GARCIA CONDOY (DETAIL OF THE ORIGINAL); COURTESY OF THE MUSEO NAVAL, MADRID.

A royal letter of April 30 provided additional details. The office of admiral would be hereditary, passing from the explorer to his heirs. The offices of viceroy and governor-general, giving Columbus the right to nominate the governor of each island, would be held at the pleasure of the crown and would not be handed down to his children.

After deductions for expenses, Columbus would receive one-tenth of any profits from the enterprise; the other nine-tenths would go to the crown. Finally, Columbus could finance up to one-eighth of the cost of any "ships outfitted for trade and business" if he wished. He then would be entitled to a proportionate share of any profits the ships realized.

The total cost of the expedition was projected at 2 million maravedis, of which the crown's share was 1,140,000 maravedis. One million of this would go toward general expenses, and 140,000 maravedis would comprise Columbus's salary as captain-general of the fleet.

According to Las Casas, Columbus personally contributed 500,000 maravedis to the venture, but it is not clear where he might have obtained that sum. For years he had been living on his income from business dealings, with periodic supplements from the crown. For a capital outlay of such magnitude he might well have needed to obtain loans. Recent research suggests that he borrowed from Italian merchants, notably from the Florentine Juanoto Berardi, a slave trader since at least 1486 and a man who remained closely linked to Columbus until Berardi's death in 1495.

After the conclusion of his negotiations with the crown, Columbus left Granada for the southwestern coast of Andalusia, where his fleet was to be outfitted. While en route he detoured through Córdoba to see Beatriz and their son Hernando. He arrived in Palos—the town where he first had entered Spain—sometime before May 23, 1492.

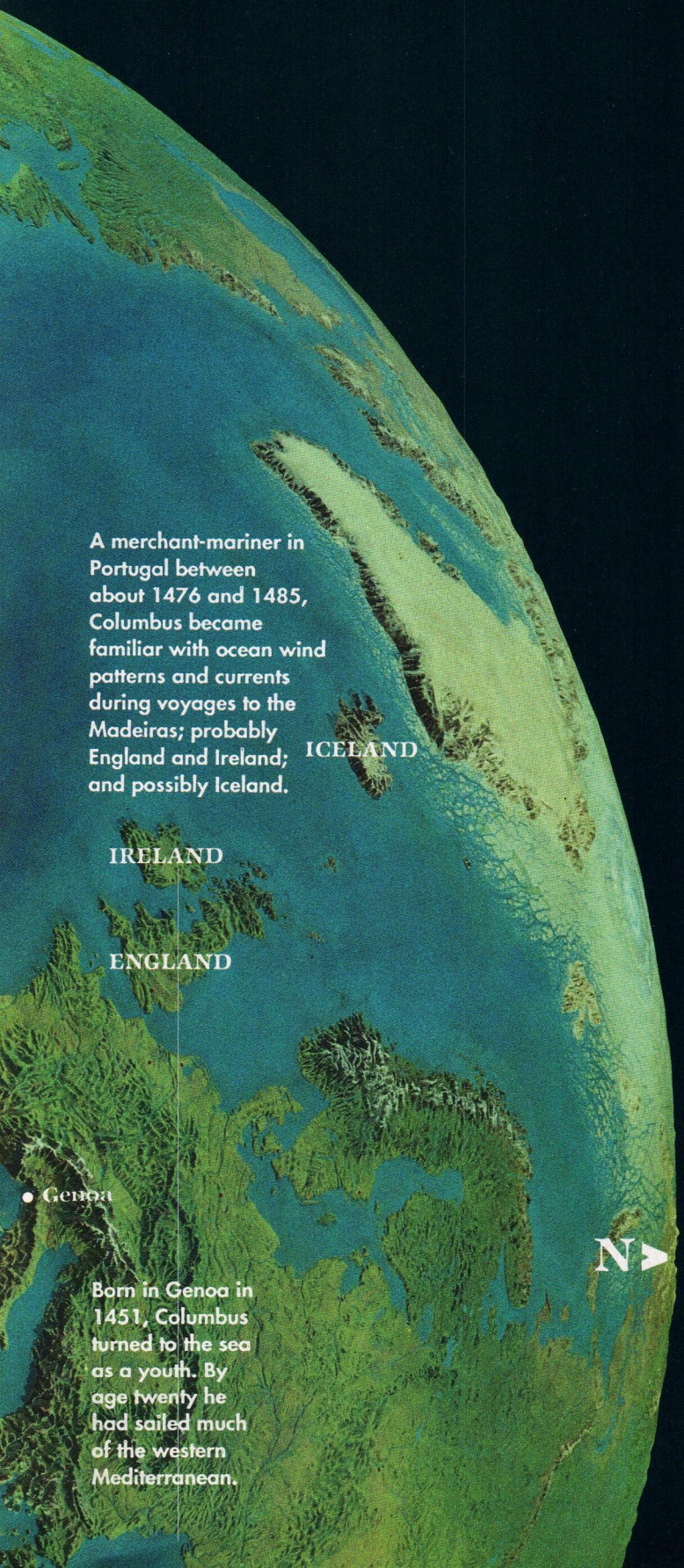
Several factors made Palos, a town of some three thousand people, a logical embarkation point for the expedition. Experienced masters, pilots, and sailors were available there. Many had sailed down the African coast in the days before treaties with Portugal prohibited Spaniards from sailing south of Cape Bojador. Thereafter, most local seamen made their living as fishermen, supporting themselves and their families in the coastal tuna fisheries that had been in operation for centuries. Shipbuilding and outfitting also were sustain-



PAINTING BY JULIO GARCIA CONDOY (DETAIL OF THE ORIGINAL); COURTESY OF THE MUSEO NAVAL, MADRID.


October 12: Land finally is sighted!; Columbus names his discovery "San Salvador."
October 10: All three crews demand that the ships turn back; Columbus agrees he will do so after continuing west a few more days.
October 6: The crew of the "Santa Maria" wants to turn back, but Columbus's fellow captains support continued exploration.
September 25: The captain of the "Pinta" sights land! It turns out to be a false alarm.
September 20-24: Encountering variable winds, Columbus makes several course changes, first to the northwest, then to the southwest, and finally back to the west again.
September 8-19: Trade winds carry the ships steadily west. By mid-September the explorers encounter weather so fair that it is like "April in Andalusia."
AZORES
CAPE VERDE ISLANDS
September 6: After a three-week layover in the Canaries, the fleet sets sail from Gomera and heads west toward the Orient.
CANARY ISLANDS
MADEIRA ISLANDS
August 3, 1492: Columbus's three ships set sail from Palos, bound for the Canary Islands.
Cape Bojador
A 1479 treaty with Portugal barred Spanish mariners from waters south of Africa's Cape Bojador—and thus from any possible eastern sea route to the Orient.
Lisbon
Palos
Cordoba
Granada
During the 1480s Columbus sailed as far south as Sao Jorge da Mina on Africa's Gold Coast.
Sao Jorge da Mina
In 1488 Portuguese mariner Bartolomeu Dias reached Africa's Cape of Good Hope; but not until 1497-99 would Vasco de Gama open an eastern sea route to Asia.

Into the Unknown



Christopher Columbus's ideas about the size of the world and the possibility of a western sea route to the Asian wonderlands of Cipango and Cathay probably did not develop all at once. It seems more reasonable that his geographical hypothesis grew incrementally, beginning with the fairly simple idea of sailing west to reach the Indies and later adding evidence from academic geographers to buttress his case.

In the biography attributed to his son Hernando, the origins of Columbus's ideas are described as "natural reasons, the authority of writers, and the testimony of sailors." But according to many scholars, Columbus read and selected from important writers later rather than sooner—perhaps even after he went to Spain, when he had already settled on his plan and was seeking to bolster its credibility.

The most important early sources of his ideas were probably far simpler and less impressive: rumors, personal experience, and physical evidence. Even Hernando's biography admitted that Columbus was "impressed by the many fables and stories which he heard from various persons and sailors who traded to the western islands and seas of the Azores and Madeira."

Columbus was not the only man of his time to believe in the plausibility of a western passage to Asia. What set him apart was a single-minded dedication to his grand design. He alone was willing to persevere for nearly a decade in seeking support, despite repeated frustrations. If he had any doubts, he stifled them.

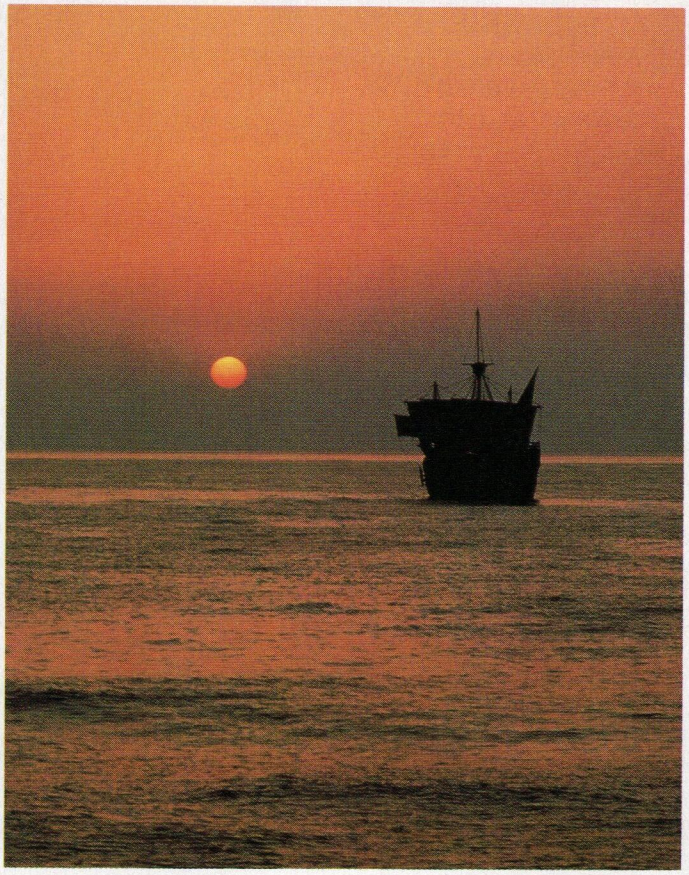
On the basis of his sources, Columbus calculated a westward distance of only 2,700 statute miles from the Canaries to Japan; the real distance is more than 12,000 miles. In other words, Columbus chose a set of figures that made his enterprise plausible, and it is hardly surprising that experts at the Portuguese and Castilian courts failed to agree with his premises and conclusions. Nevertheless, if he had not sailed westward in search of Asia, someone else probably soon would have done so. The time was right for such a bold undertaking, and the European economy was poised to take advantage of the expanded trade that a direct ocean route to Asia would afford.

Columbus was clearly well positioned for the role that history assigned him. Experienced with trade and with the sea, widely read in the cosmography of the day, and fortuitously given the opportunity to benefit from that knowledge, he was the right man in the right place at the right time. That, and his strength of character and perseverance, justly earned him the fame that he still enjoys five hundred years after his historic first voyage.

GEO-PHYSICAL GLOBE AND PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF RAND MCNALLY & COMPANY.
WESTERN HEMISPHERE VIEWED FROM 20 DEGREES NORTH, 0 DEGREES LONGITUDE.
(NORTH IS AT RIGHT SIDE OF PAGES.)
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TOP AND BOTTOM LEFT: PHOTOGRAPHS BY BOB SACHA, NEW YORK CITY. BOTTOM RIGHT: PHOTOGRAPH BY REBECCA MARVIL, FROM LIGHT SOURCES STOCK, BOSTON.

ing activities in Palos, providing Columbus with the necessary facilities for fitting out and provisioning his fleet. In 1491 tuna fishermen from Palos had violated the royal prohibition against venturing into African coastal waters south of the Canary Islands. The town's penalty was to pay for two caravels for the crown's use; these conveniently became the caravels assigned to Columbus's expedition.

Another circumstance made Palos an attractive choice for Columbus's departure point. In the spring of 1492 the larger Andalusian ports of Seville and Cádiz already were crowded with ships carrying Spanish Jews into exile. July 31 marked the deadline (later extended for nine days) for the departure of Spanish Jews choosing to keep their religion rather than convert to Chrisianity and remain. Similar expulsions had occurred in England in 1295 and in France in 1306. The rising tide of ethnic and religious hostility caught up with Spain in 1492, adding an ironic twist to Columbus's preparations. While he searched for Spaniards willing to brave the unknown on his expedition, another group of Spaniards was being forced into exile.

On May 23, Columbus and Friar Juan Pérez from the monastery of La Rábida went to the church of San Jorge in Palos for a public meeting. There the town clerk read a royal proclamation announcing Columbus's voyage to an assembly of local officials. The documents stated that the monarchs had appointed Christopher Columbus as captain-general of an armada of three caravals (as it turned out, two small caravels and a larger *nao*) to sail to certain parts of the ocean sea. In support of the expedition, the officials of Palos had to pay for the use of two caravels with their crews and for provisions for two months. The balance of the rental fee would be borne by Columbus and his financial backers. The crown would pay the ships' crews four months' salary in advance.

After hearing the proclamation, the local officials pledged that the royal will would be carried out. Columbus then went to the nearby port town of Moguer, where he published another royal proclamation, this one calling for the people of Andalusia to allow him to purchase the equipment and provisions he needed for the voyage.

In fairly short order, Columbus requisitioned two caravels in Moguer on Palos's account, using the royal decree as his authority. One was the *Santa Clara*, built in Moguer and commonly called *Niña* after her owner Juan Niño. The other was the *Pinta*, owned by Cristóbal Quintero. Columbus himself chartered the third vessel, a *nao* called the *Santa María*, built in Galicia and often referred to as *La Gallega*.

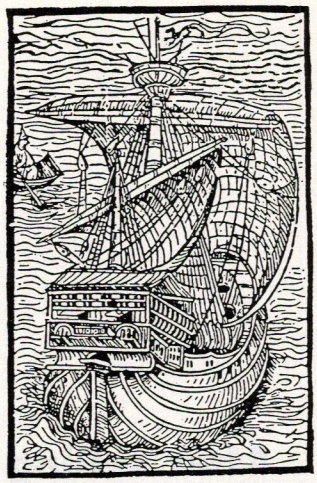
Requisitioning the caravels and chartering the *nao* were simple business transactions; persuading officers and sailors to sign on as crew members proved to be much more difficult. At first Columbus had little success, even with the help of the Franciscans of La Rábida. Only after he struck a deal with a prominent local shipowner named Martín Alonso Pinzón did the rosters begin to fill.

At the time, Pinzón was a man in his early forties. He had owned ships and traded in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic for most of his adult life. He had visited Lisbon and the Canary Islands, and he probably had been to Guinea on the West African coast as well. Years later, witnesses in court cases that embroiled the Columbus and Pinzón families recalled Martín Alonso with admiration. One said that he "was eager and held to be a very wise man expert in the matters of sailing, and that he was a rich and well-connected man and one of the principal ones that there were at that time in Palos and there was no one else so renowned. . . ."

Martín Alonso had a younger brother, Vicente Yáñez, about thirty years old in 1492. Local people regarded Vicente Yáñez, like Martín Alonso, as a distinguished and honorable person. Historian Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo considered him "one of the best-spoken men of the sea whom I have seen and who best understood his art."

When Columbus first tried to raise a crew, Martín Alonso was at sea, delivering a cargo of sardines to Rome. Sometime in June he returned to Palos, and with encouragement from the priests of La Rábida he and Columbus began negotiations.

Columbus and Pinzón met at least once in the house of an old mariner named Pedro Vázquez de la Frontera, who lived in Palos and had a history of his own in Atlantic exploration. Forty years before, Vázquez had sailed with the legendary Portuguese Diogo de Teive in search of lands to the west. Starting from the island of Fayal in the Azores, Teive and his crew had sailed southwest for about 150 leagues (approximately 550 statute miles), observed the sea grasses of the Sargasso Sea; turned back toward the Azores; there discovered the western islands of Flores and Corvo; and then sailed north to the latitude of



Sailing with ninety men and three ships—the nao "Santa María" and caravels "Niña" and "Pinta"—Columbus set forth on his voyage of destiny on August 3, 1492. The first leg took the explorers south from Andalusia to the Castilian-controlled Canary Islands. After replenishing stores and refitting one of the caravels at the island of Gomera, the fleet again set sail on September 6, this time heading due west. Trade winds steadily carried the small ships hundreds of leagues into uncharted regions; the winds were so regular and seas so calm, in fact, that the crews finally became alarmed, fearful that there never would be other winds to carry them back home. In the autumn of 1991 three replicas of Columbus's ships, built by the Spanish government, also experienced gentle breezes and placid seas as they followed roughly the same track across once-unknown waters (opposite).

WOODCUT OF A FIFTEENTH-CENTURY SHIP, FROM AN EARLY PRINTING OF COLUMBUS'S LETTER ANNOUNCING HIS NEW-WORLD DISCOVERIES.

After sailing for thirty-six days, Columbus and his men were a few short hours from one of the most fateful encounters in all recorded history.



Ireland. Vázquez encouraged Columbus and Pinzón to undertake the venture.

Martín Alonso was impressed by Columbus's presentation and the corroboration provided by Vázquez. He threw in his lot with the mariner from Genoa, promising by the royal crown that neither he nor his relatives would return to Palos without discovering land to the west. Martín Alonso also accepted command of the *Pinta* and persuaded his brother Vicente Yáñez to join the expedition as captain of the *Niña*. Together, the Pinzón brothers took responsibility for raising the crews.

Despite his reputation, Martín Alonso still faced a difficult task. Many local seamen needed to be convinced of the wisdom of the venture before signing on. The reasons for their reluctance and the effect this had on the composition of the final crews have been variously interpreted by historians, but two misguided notions should be laid to rest. The first notion asserts that because all sailors believed the earth was flat they feared sailing off the edge by going too far west. The idea that in 1492 everyone but Columbus believed in a flat earth seems to be a modern misconception. In reality, educated people all over Europe knew the earth was round; the knowledge had been commonplace for a thousand years. Mariners in particular had seen visual proof of a spherical earth, frequently encountering the phenomenon of sighting landmarks or the tops of ship's masts on the horizon and then watching them gradually "rise" into view as their vessel drew closer.

Nevertheless, voyages beyond the familiar sea lanes of the eastern Atlantic did hold real terrors for seamen. The sailors of Palos and Moguer disliked the uncertainties of sailing new routes far from land, with no assurance of obtaining favorable winds for a safe return—let alone of finding anything worthwhile. One who stayed behind was Bartolomé Colín, who summed up the local attitude by saying that people believed "that there was no land in that part of the world, because it had been sought from Portugal many times," and that Columbus's effort would come to nothing.

PAINTING BY JOSE GARNELO Y ALDA (1892, DETAIL OF THE ORIGINAL); BROWN BROTHERS, STERLING, PENNSYLVANIA.



Columbus had told his crews that after sailing 750 leagues they should sight land. By October 6, despite seeing birds and other harbingers of land, they had gone 800 leagues and still made no landfall. For several more days the explorer successfully resisted demands to turn back, but by October 10 he was forced to promise that if land were not sighted soon he would reverse course. Then, early on the morning of the twelfth a sailor glimpsed an island—and a few hours later Columbus led a party ashore to one of history's most fateful human encounters (left), a meeting between peoples previously unknown to one another. Columbus and his officers believed they were somewhere close to the legendary Cipango. They had no idea that their landing was taking place near the edge of a new continent and that the Japan they sought was still half a world away.

The second misconception about Columbus's crew members relates to the first. Because the best sailors feared falling off the edge of the flat earth, the story goes, the crews had to be signed on from condemned criminals, who presumably were desperate enough to take the risk. In fact, of the ninety men who accompanied Columbus and the Pinzones, only three came directly from the public jail. One of the men had been charged with murdering the town crier of Palos, and the other two had been charged with attempting to break the accused out of jail. They evidently were not considered a threat to public safety and were granted reduced sentences if they would sign on for the voyage. Although three in ninety hardly qualifies as an expedition of jailbirds, the fact that criminals were enlisted at all testifies to the difficulties of filling out the crews.

With vigorous recruiting by Martín Alonso and other members of his family, preparations shifted into high gear. Columbus and the Pinzones began signing up crew members on June 23, and a little more than a month later they filled the rosters. By then the three vessels were ready to sail and loaded with enough provisions for a year.

We know a good deal about the crew members who finally embarked on the voyage, thanks primarily to the work of a remarkable American named Alice Bache Gould. An independent scholar from a wealthy family in New England, she spent decades researching the life histories of the men who dared to join Columbus and the Pinzones. The seamen whose lives she chronicled represented a cross-section of maritime society in southwestern Spain in the late fifteenth century.

Of the forty men who served on board the *Santa María*, thirty-seven have been identified. Christopher Columbus acted as the flagship's captain, as well as captain-general of the expedition. Juan de la Cosa, owner of the *Santa María*, served as her master for the voyage, keeping track of rations and equipment and performing administrative duties. Peralonso Niño, from

Continued on page 66

One hundred years ago the author's grandfather—then about the same age as the boy pictured opposite outside the bullet-riddled doors of the Condon Bank in Coffeyville, Kansas—had a front-row view when one of the Old West's most electrifying shootouts began.

The Day the Daltons Rode into Town

by Rosemary Davis

October 5, 1892 was a day my grandfather, Alexander Woodson ("Woodie") Martin never forgot. He used to say that he was "just one day short of nine years and three months" when it happened. That was the day the infamous Dalton gang, who had terrorized portions of several midwestern states, rode into Coffeyville, Kansas to rob the farming town's two banks.

Ironically, the notorious outlaws had drifted into a life of crime while wearing the badges of lawmen, seeking to avenge the death of their brother Frank, a deputy marshal shot in 1887 by bootlegging gunmen. The three brothers-gone-bad—Gratton, Bob, and Emmett—first turned to horse stealing, then to train robbery and murder.* Then, in the autumn of 1892, bragging that they could upstage the evil exploits of their second cousins Bob and Cole Younger, the Daltons and their cohorts hatched a plot to rob two banks simultaneously—in broad daylight and, as the crowning touch, in their former hometown of Coffeyville.

But the days of glorious frontier Robin Hoods luxuriating under the protective cloak of a sympathetic populace had ended some years earlier. Coffeyville's residents, the hapless Dalton gang was soon to discover, would fight back—to the death if necessary.

My grandfather was headed up Union Street on the morning of October 5. He and his boyhood chum, Bert Read, had delayed the inevitable start of school by stopping to investigate some men digging a foundation for a new building. At about twenty minutes to ten the boys stood at the edge of the town plaza, about half a block south of where Union Street separated the C. M. Condon & Co. Bank from the First National Bank.

Little did the two youngsters realize they were about to witness the opening scene of the most historic event ever to shake Coffeyville.

For as Woodie and Bert watched the workers, five sinister figures, raising a heavy cloud of dust on the dry streets, boldly rode into town from the west. Grat, Bob, and Emmett Dalton, who had lived near Coffeyville a few years previously and knew they could be recognized, wore false beards and mustaches. Co-conspirators Bill Powers (alias Tom Evans) and Dick Broadwell (alias Texas Jack) comprised the remainder of the heavily armed party.*

The outlaws had planned to leave their horses on Eighth Street, which crossed town just north of the plaza and banks, but the roadway and curbing there were under repair and the hitching racks missing. So the group turned south onto Maple Street and then into a wide alley that led east onto the square. This deviation from their plan was the first in a chain of circumstances that soon would prove to be the bandits' undoing.

Dismounting, the gunmen tied their horses to a fence behind the temporary residence of police judge Charles Munn and then walked down the alley past the city jail and toward the banks. At the end of the alley they passed merchant Aleck McKenna, who was standing in front of his dry goods and grocery store. McKenna immediately recognized one of the Dalton brothers from his peculiar gait and the odd shape of his head. The visitors' obvious disguises heightened his alarm. McKenna watched in dis-

*Another brother, William, turned to outlawry later and was killed by Oklahoma lawmen in 1894.

*Apparently a sixth member of the gang, possibly either Bill Doolin or George "Bitter Creek" Newcomb, dropped out of the raiding party only minutes before it entered town.



may as three of the men dog-trotted into the Condon Bank, which faced south onto the plaza, and the other two continued briskly across Union Street and entered the First National Bank.

My grandfather and his friend, blissfully unaware of the momentous events taking place a few dozen yards up the street, continued to watch the excavating.

Inside the Condon Bank, Grat Dalton, Bill Powers, and Dick Broadwell confronted Charles Carpenter, an owner; Tom Babb, the bookkeeper; and Charlie Ball, the cashier. Powers stationed himself by the southwest door through which the outlaws had entered the bank. Broadwell covered the southeast entrance, where he had a clear view of the First National Bank across the street.

The gunmen leveled their rifles at the employees and two unwitting customers who had walked in just as the robbery began. Grat shoved a two-bushel grain sack at Ball and ordered the distraught cashier to hold it open while Carpenter filled it with money. The owner collected about $1,100 from the cash drawers and deposited the booty in the bag.

Grat then ordered the young cashier to open the safe, but Ball replied that it was on a time-lock and wouldn't open until 9:45 A.M., another three minutes away. Grat said they would wait. Ball's bold stalling tactic was to prove fatal to the robbers, who would have discovered, had they tried, that the safe already was open.

Meanwhile, gang leader Bob Dalton and his younger brother Emmett were busy at the First National Bank. Charging through the doors, they accosted cashier Tom Ayres; his son Bert, the bookkeeper; teller W.H. Shepard; and three customers. Emmett turned to guard the customers while Bob ordered Bert Ayres to collect the money—about $20,000 from the drawers and vault.

These events had not gone unobserved. The large plate-glass windows in front of both banks allowed passers-by to see what was transpiring inside. Within moments, Coffeyville would rally against the desperadoes.

McKenna, who had spotted the Dalton gang in the alley, witnessed the beginning of the holdup at the Condon Bank and quickly spread an alarm. So did J. P. Moran, driver of a Consolidated Company oil tank wagon, making a delivery to Slosson's Drug Store across the alley from McKenna's business.

My grandfather and his friend now noticed the growing excitement, but neither immediately realized what was happening. Then the actions of Martin Davenport, who was driving his delivery wagon down Union Street toward the two boys, attracted their attention. As he drew abreast of the banks, Davenport abruptly pulled his team to a halt. Suddenly he whipped the team into a gallop and barreled down the street yelling, "Robbing the bank! Robbing the bank!"

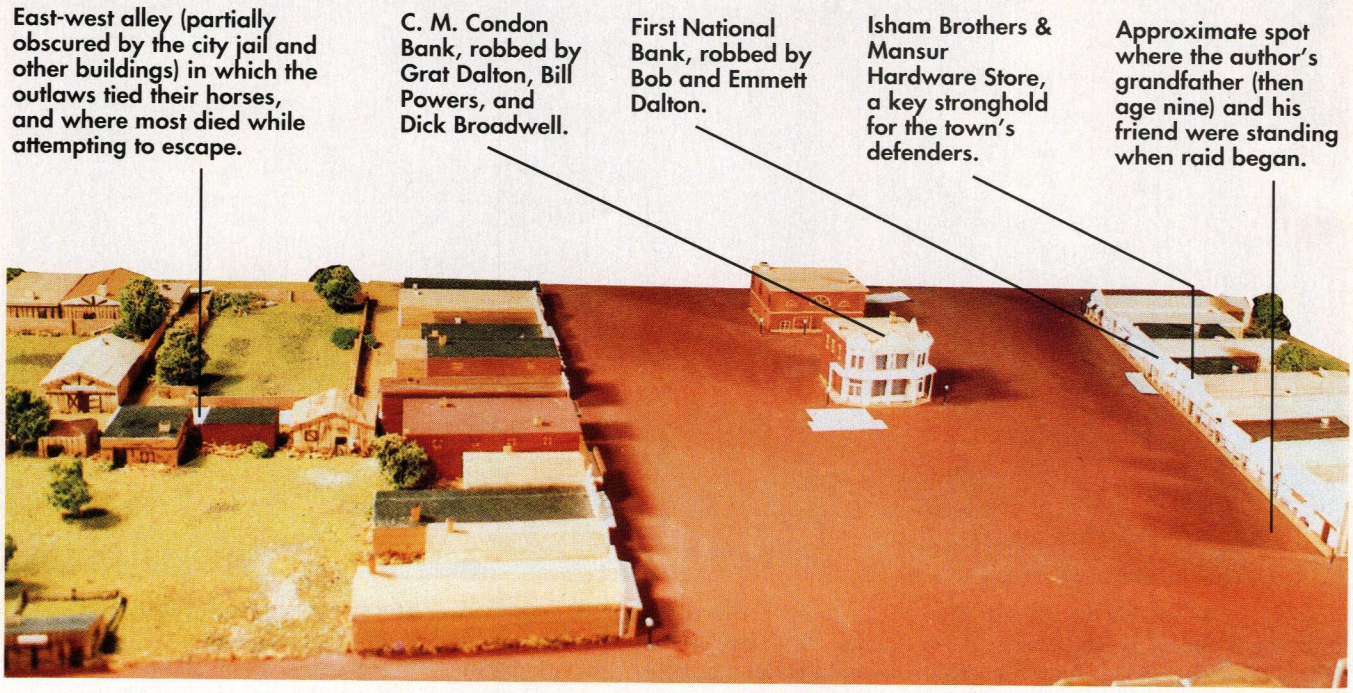
The call to arms spread like a prairie fire. Men ran for guns.* Women grabbed children and whisked them to safety. Woodie and Bert ducked under a buckboard and crawled around the corner before running home with the electrifying news.

Luckily two nearby hardware stores —Isham Brothers & Mansur, and A. P. Boswell & Co.—sold firearms. The owners quickly passed out guns and ammunition to the men racing into the stores. Woodie later recalled that Isham "had a roll of old-time iron cookstoves that were lined up across

*None of the town's citizens was armed that morning. Even the marshal, Charles Connelly, had left his revolver at home.

C .M. CONDON BANK IN COFFEYVILLE, KANSAS FOLLOWING THE OCTOBER 5, 1892 DALTON RAID; PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE KANSAS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY, TOPEKA

A diorama of Coffeyville's plaza area at the time of the October 5, 1892 Dalton raid (below), researched and built by Garrett Fresh, shows the respective locations of the C. M. Condon and First National banks and the alley where the outlaws left their horses. In this photograph the viewer is facing roughly north.



the front part of the store and they used these as a barricade."

The location of Isham's store was particularly important because it stood next door to the First National Bank and just across the street from the Condon Bank. Equally important, the front door lay in almost a direct line with the alley where the gunmen's getaway horses were tethered.

The square echoed with gunfire as farmers, storekeepers, bricklayers, and carpenters laid down a withering barrage, cutting off the bandits' escape routes.

Dick Broadwell, stationed at the southeast doorway of the Condon Bank, was the first outlaw to be wounded when he was struck in the arm. After calmly stating that he had been hit, Broadwell told the hostages in the bank that "You'd better get under the counter, or you might get killed by some of those people."

Bob and Emmett Dalton, meanwhile, attempted an escape out the front door of the First National Bank, using the three employees as hostages. Bullets rained from all directions. Bob and Emmett returned the fire, and one of Bob's bullets hit Charles Gump, standing outside Isham's with a shotgun. The first citizen injured in the raid, Gump was rushed into the hardware store for treatment of his wounded hand.

The heavy gunfire forced Bob and Emmett back inside the First National Bank with hostages Bert Ayres and W. H. Shepard. Meanwhile the third hostage, Tom Ayres, broke free and ran next door to Isham's, where he secured a rifle and joined his fellow vigilantes.

Bob and Emmett ran to the back of the First National Bank and found the rear exit. As the Daltons stepped into the back alley with hostage Shepard, they saw Lucius Baldwin, a young clerk from Read Brothers' Department Store, walking toward them with a gun at his side. Bob yelled to Lucius to stop, but the youth apparently mistook the outlaws for fellow townsmen and continued his approach. Bob Dalton's gun claimed Coffeyville's second victim as Lucius fell dying with a bullet through his chest.

Leaving Shepard behind, the Dalton brothers ran north through the alley, then turned west at the corner. As the two gunmen reached the head of Union Street they saw George Cubine standing in the doorway of Rammel Brothers Drug Store, holding a Winchester rifle and facing away from them, toward the First National Bank next door. Bob fired four times, and Coffeyville's third casualty (ironically, a former acquaintance of Bob's) fell dead in front of the store.

Charles Brown, an elderly gentleman, owned the store next to Rammels'. When Brown saw Cubine fall, he ran to his friend's side and seized the rifle. The Daltons opened fire again, and Brown collapsed next to Cubine.

Crossing Union Street, Bob then spied Tom Ayres, stationed with a rifle in the doorway of Isham's where

Recommended additional reading: *The Last Raid of the Daltons* by David Stewart Elliott (Coffeyville, Kansas, 1892); reprints available for $5.00 postpaid from Coffeyville Convention and Visitors Bureau, P.O. Box 457, Coffeyville, Kansas 67337.

MODEL COURTESY OF GARRETT FRESH; PHOTOGRAPH BY MARGARET KICE

he previously had found refuge. Taking careful aim at the man who had escaped him, Bob squeezed the trigger. The bullet found its mark; Ayres was carried unconscious into Isham's to join Gump.

As Bob and Emmett Dalton worked their way back toward their horses along Eighth Street, Grat Dalton, Bill Powers, and Dick Broadwell prepared to attempt their own escape from the Condon Bank. Bill fired wildly at the men barricaded under Isham's front awning; one of his bullets wounded Arthur Reynolds, who was ushered inside to join the other wounded defenders.

Then, in a bold and desperate move, the robber trio darted out of the southwest door of the Condon bank into a hailstorm of bullets. All three were wounded immediately but kept running. Broadwell, who took a bullet in the back, managed to reach the Long-Bell lumber yard at the far end of the alley, where he hid and awaited a chance to escape. Powers made it to his horse, only to fall dead at its feet. Dalton found cover under the abandoned Consolidated Co. oil tanker, then worked his way to the side of a barn closer to the waiting horses.

Meanwhile, marshal Charles Connelly, barber Carey Seamen, and liveryman John Kloehr ran down Ninth Street, seeking to intercept the gang members before they could reach their horses. Connelly cut through a vacant lot and sprang into the alley by the barn—unfortunately with his back toward Grat, concealed some twenty feet away. The oldest Dalton shot the lawman in the back; Connelly fell mortally wounded.

Grat then tried to reach his horse, but Kloehr had entered the alley just in time to see the outlaw murder the marshal. Kloehr leveled his rifle and fired. Grat Dalton went down for the last time.

A momentary lull in the shooting gave Dick Broadwell time to crawl from his hiding place, mount his horse, and charge away. Shots hit him in the back, but Dick had a firm grip and galloped out of town.

Bob and Emmett Dalton now raced into "Death Alley" from a smaller passageway next to McKenna's store. Bob inexplicably stepped into the middle of the alley, looking upwards as if searching for rooftop snipers. A shot from Kloehr knocked the gang leader into a sitting position on a pile of bricks near the jail. Although the wounded desperado continued firing his rifle, he'd lost his aim by this time and the shots went wild. Then, as a second bullet from Kloehr found its mark, Bob collapsed in the dust.

Emmett, the youngest member of the Dalton gang, miraculously had remained uninjured during his escape from the bank. The outlaw succeeded in mounting his steed, but instead of riding out of town turned back in an attempt to rescue his brother. As Emmett reached down from his horse, Bob feebly stretched out his arm in response. Then blasts from both barrels of Carey Seamen's shotgun, fired at point-blank range, struck Emmett in the back and shoulder. Literally knocked out of the saddle, he fell to lie beside his dying brother.

The hail of gunfire ceased, and an eerie silence descended on Coffeyville. "They're all down!" someone shouted; defenders with smoking rifles cautiously emerged from storefronts around the square and converged on the body-strewn alley. The entire raid, from first shot to last, had consumed just twelve minutes.

The fierce gun battle had claimed the lives of four citizens, four outlaws, and three horses. Three other townsmen and Emmett Dalton, the only surviving member of the Dalton gang, had been wounded.

Resisting urges of a lynching, some men carried Emmett to a doctor's office. (Amazingly, the gunman eventually recovered from at least sixteen bullet wounds. Sentenced to life in prison, he was pardoned after serving more than fourteen years.) Other citizens helped carry the bodies of slain and wounded neighbors to their homes. Still others rode out in search of Dick Broadwell, whose body they found alongside the road about a half-mile outside of town.

The $20,000 that Emmett still carried was returned to officials at the First National Bank. Grat's breast pocket held the $1,100 from the Condon Bank, which authorities quickly recovered.

Several men hauled planks from the lumber company to lay out the bodies of the bandits at the jail. Businesses closed and the residents of Coffeyville went into mourning for the sons, husbands, fathers, and friends they had lost. What had begun as an ordinary, peaceful day in a small town on the southeastern border of Kansas had turned into a nightmare that would haunt the townspeople for years.

Perhaps the greatest insight into the combined character of the four men who had died protecting Coffeyville lay in the fact that not one of them had any financial interest in either bank. Like their neighbors, the fallen defenders simply had been trying to do what they could for their community. And with everyone working together, the town had succeeded in ending the reign of one of the most notorious outlaw gangs in the history of the region.

Although young Woodie vacated the scene just as the shootout began, the sensational details of the morning's events quickly became common knowledge, thereafter passing into the annals of American folklore. And for the rest of his ninety-nine-year life, Alexander Woodson Martin awed his friends and family with his dramatic recollections of the memorable day the Daltons rode into town. ★

Rosemary Davis is a nonfiction writer living in Philadelphia.

Coffeyville, Kansas will mark the centennial of the Dalton Raid with five days of activities on October 1-5, 1992. Associated events include tours of historic homes, a film festival, a memorial service for descendents of the town's defenders, and a Dalton reunion. Highlighting the centennial are four re-enactments of the raid, at 11 A.M. and 3 P.M. on October 3; at 2 P.M. on October 4; and, exactly one hundred years after the historic gun battle, at 9:45 A.M. on October 5. For more information contact the Coffeyville Convention & Visitors Bureau, P.O. Box 457, Coffeyville, Kansas 67337, 800-626-3357.

A place of history made and in the making, the stately two-centuries-old presidential mansion in Washington, D.C. reflects the dreams of the visionaries who created it, the lifestyles of the presidents and their families who have occupied it, and the values and aspirations of the people who own it.

The White House

by Edward Oxford

"Nobody lives here," President Calvin Coolidge once wryly remarked of the White House and its occupants. "They just come and go."

The magnificent mansion at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue in the nation's capital, two hundred years after the setting of its cornerstone, continues to intrigue and inspire Americans.

Here, remarkably incorporated into a single building are the home of the chief executive and his family; the daily workplace of the president and his staff; the ceremonial center of the country and focal point of its power; and a priceless repository for the American peoples' collective memory.

To look upon this timeless house is to glimpse the nation's past, to perceive its present, and to sense its future. Somehow, the White House—this setting of memory and sentiment, of decision and action, of hope and dreams—dramatizes the story of the United States.

Declares its current resident, President George Bush: "I am filled with pride, reverence, and respect when I consider this place. The importance of the White House comes not from its occupants, but from its owners—the people of America."

Historian Bruce Catton similarly has observed that "the White House is a peculiarly American institution. If it reflects the personality of the man who occupies it, it also reflects the total personality of the people who put him there. It is their own special possession and symbol, embodying what they hoped for and dreamed of and want to live up to."

In the long, critical process of selecting a permanent site for the nation's capital, George Washington had a vital interest—and strong opinions that ultimately influenced the location and form of that capital. The first president, who envisioned a great city that would become a cultural and mercantile hub as well as the political heart of the nation, was authorized by Congress in July 1790 to select a site "not exceeding ten miles square on the river Potomac." The federal government, so it was planned, would move from Philadelphia to the new capital district a decade later, on "the first Monday in December, 1800."

By January 1791 Washington had selected the acreage (from both Maryland and Virginia) that would comprise the Federal City. A "howling, malarious wilderness," one commentator exaggeratedly called it—a place of forest and wetlands characterized by humid summers and snowy winters. Undaunted, the president appointed three commissioners to oversee the mighty project.

To design the capital, Washington chose Major Pierre Charles L'Enfant, a young French engineer who had served on the general's staff during the Revolutionary War. L'Enfant visualized a "city of magnificent distances," incorporating a grid of parallel streets overlaid by diagonally sweeping avenues. As one of the focal points, the "President's House" was to be something of a palace—monumental in scale (several times larger, indeed, than the actual structure that eventuated) and ornate enough to please a monarch.

Washington, as both promoter and patron of the new capital, at first thought of the president's domicile in much the same way as L'Enfant. After a time, however—with a falling-out between president and planner and growing complaints by the citizenry—he came to think of the "palace" more as a "house."

In March 1792 Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson prepared a newspaper advertisement announcing a design competition for a "President's House." Concurrently, Washington began making inquiries of his own, which led him to discussions with architect James Hoban of South Carolina, whom he had met the year before.

"BUILDING THE FIRST WHITE HOUSE" BY N. C. WYETH (CIRCA 1930, DETAIL OF THE ORIGINAL); FROM THE LITHOGRAPH PRODUCED BY THE PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD; PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE BRANDYWINE RIVER MUSEUM, CHADDS FORD, PENNSYLVANIA.





By the mid-July deadline, nine competitors had submitted designs. (One concept bearing the initials "A.Z." has been attributed to Jefferson himself.) Hoban not surprisingly was declared winner; he was granted a prize worth $500—a gold medal and the remainder in cash. And, he was engaged to supervise construction of the mansion.

The thirty-four-year-old Hoban had emigrated just seven years earlier from Ireland, where he had studied at the Royal Dublin Society's drawing school. His design for the President's House owed much to the look of an imposing Dublin residence—the home of the Duke of Leinster. He also may have been influenced by a "Design for a Gentleman's House" that appeared in *A Book of Architecture*, a then-standard work by Englishman James Gibbs. It was this echoing of much-admired houses elsewhere—buildings with an aura of permanence—that probably impressed Washington.

Hoban's Georgian design reached back to Roman and Greek styles. His plan called for a rectangular, three-story structure containing thirty-six rooms.* It featured a hipped roof, a balustrade, and large symmetrically arranged windows with alternating triangular and curved pediments.

Hoban had learned that Washington admired an oval room in the Philadelphia mansion where the president currently resided. So the nimble-witted architect incorporated into his design *three* oval rooms—one above another. And, catering to Washington's preference for stone rather than brick, the self-styled "house carpenter" designed an edifice whose walls would endure through the centuries.

The commissioners had hoped for a house that would bespeak "a grandeur of composition, a republican simplicity, and true elegance of proportion." Hoban presented just such a design. Relatively small and unpretentious by international standards yet clean-lined and stately, the mansion provided an architectural statement in keeping with a nation founded for and about "the common man."

George Washington sought to assure his countrymen that with faith and funds, a Federal City really would rise from the wilderness site. In this regard, he felt that a ceremony marking the beginning of work on the President's House might spur the sale of lots. Planners chose October 13, 1792 for the historic occasion.

That Saturday, the commissioners, Hoban, master stonemason Collen Williamson, and numerous workmen and citizens assembled at the site of the future mansion, situated on a knoll that sloped down toward the Potomac. Ironically, Washington was detained in Philadelphia, unable to participate in the cornerstone-laying of the structure that he, more than any other individual, was responsible for bringing into existence.

At the southwest corner of the future mansion, near the edge of a huge excavation previously carved out for the "palace" L'Enfant had envisioned, a mason placed on a foundation stone a plate of polished brass bearing the inscription "This first stone of the President's House was laid the 13th day of October, 1792, and in the 17th year of independence of the United States of America." The plate also bore the names of Washington, Hoban, Williamson, and the commissioners, and the words *Vivat Republica* (Long live the Republic). Workmen then positioned a cornerstone over the plate.*

Construction of the presidential mansion consumed more than eight years. The sale of lots—intended to defray the costs of construction—went slowly. And with the responsibility of erecting a Capitol building added to that of building the President's House, Congress pulled the purse strings tight. One congressman even suggested that rented quarters might do a president quite well.

But Washington persisted. Despite shortages of skilled artisans, work continued. Using chisels and saws with copper-wire blades, masons cut thousands of gray sandstone blocks from a quarry at Aquia Creek, south of Mount Vernon. Barges floated the stone up the Potomac; then horses dragged the blocks to the building site. There, skilled stoneworkers imported from Scotland erected the thick walls around an interior shell of several hundred thousand bricks, all manufactured on the grounds.

Year after year masons, brickmakers, carpenters, blacksmiths, teamsters, and slave laborers shaped the singular form of the mansion. And around them, the Federal City began to emerge. One observer described a landscape where "temples rose among primeval swamps."

The first chief executive of the United States, who had given the presidency a dignity and stature that set the model for those to follow him, left office in 1797. On his way from Philadelphia, heading home to Mount Vernon, he paused in his carriage to view the President's House. Its window apertures as yet had no glass.

*Early in the mansion's construction Washington ordered the three stories reduced to two, so Hoban eliminated the raised basement featured in the original design. As built, the mansion measured 168 feet long by 85 feet wide—far smaller than L'Enfant had envisioned but nevertheless the largest home then in America.

*The plate apparently still remains in place, its exact location now forgotten.

SOUTH FRONT OF THE WHITE HOUSE; PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT LLEWELLYN.

John Adams, the first president to live in the White House, prayed that "none but honest and wise Men ever rule under this roof."

The roof was but partly finished. Then Washington, eyes ahead, rode on. Although the former president never entered it, in the palatial home he chose and approved as well as in his personage, America could perceive authority, prestige, gravity, and a sense of humility.

During its two centuries of existence, the White House has mirrored changes within the nation itself. To date, nearly forty First Families have come, left their imprint, and then made way for their successors.

White House curator Rex Scouten has worked in and about the mansion since Harry S. Truman's presidency. For many years he served as chief usher—manager of the household. Now, as curator, he tends to its heritage. Scouten can recite a story to go with just about every rug, wall, chandelier, fireplace, window, and *object d'art* in the mansion.

"The White House is a place one comes to revere," says the curator. "A place, like homes throughout our nation, where lives are lived. Whatever happens to families across the country can happen here, to the First Family. There can be happiness here, just as there can be sorrow. Good days, and days when things go wrong. Laughter, tragedy, hope—they all have been part of the place."

As the relocation date for the nation's capital approached, harried builders waged a losing battle to meet construction deadlines. When President John Adams became the White House's first occupant in November 1800, he found only six rooms completed.* The cavernous chambers, mostly unfurnished, were still damp with fresh plaster. There was no grand staircase leading from the state floor up to the second-floor living quarters, nor even an outhouse. Huts, sheds, and rubbish littered the muddy grounds. Water had to be fetched from springs a half-mile away.

"It is habitable [only] by fires in every part," complained Abigail Adams, "thirteen of which we are obliged to keep daily, or sleep in wet and damp places." Finding "not the least fence, yard, or other convenience" outside the mansion, Abigail hung the presidential laundry in the spacious East Room—future location of glittering state receptions.

Despite the deplorable condition in which he had found the mansion, Adams wrote in a letter: "I pray Heaven to bestow the best of blessings on this House and all that shall hereafter inhabit it. May none but honest and wise Men ever rule under this roof." His words are with us still—inscribed on the order of Franklin D. Roosevelt nearly a century and a half later, on a mantel in the State Dining Room.

The Adamses resided in the White House less than four months before surrendering it to Thomas Jefferson with perhaps more relief than disappointment.

Jefferson, himself an amateur architect, lamented that the presidential mansion was too big and too British for his simpler tastes. He nonetheless immediately set to work on its completion and furnishing (and even enlargement). The new president replaced Washington's three-man capital commission with a single figure responsible for all the city's public buildings. Bypassing James Hoban for the post, he selected architect Benjamin Henry Latrobe, who, in addition to his main responsibility of overseeing construction of the Capitol building, would work with Jefferson in improving his new home.

During the next several years Jefferson and Latrobe added colonnaded wings at each end of the White House to accommodate domestic services previously located in shanties; enclosed the mansion in a five-acre yard; and built a triumphal entryway that stood for the next fifty years at the southeast corner of the estate. For comfort's sake, they also added two stoves and two water-closets that were flushed with rain water collected in reservoirs in the attic.

Despite his aristocratic background, Jefferson was determined that the President's House not be a place for royal ways. He opened the doors each day to all visitors. He shook hands with dinner guests (a greeting he found more democratic than bowing); and entertained lavishly but informally—much to the chagrin of some visiting dignitaries.

The diminutive "Father of the Constitution," fourth president James Madison, accompanied by his effervescent wife Dolley (likely one of the home's most colorful personalities) next inhabited the mansion. Because Dolley frequently had acted as widower Jefferson's official hostess at state functions, she already knew her way around the White House.

Even as president-elect, Madison had definite ideas about his future residence. Seeing the mansion as the scene of lively social gatherings that could be politically useful, he called on Latrobe to decorate and furnish several state rooms. The architect began a "picture gallery" in the formal dining room, for a start hanging a now-famous Gilbert Stuart portrait of George Washington.

During Madison's second term, in the latter days of the War of 1812, the White House endured its darkest hour. In August 1814 the mansion became a casualty of war when a British invasion force under Rear Admiral Sir George Cockburn entered the virtually undefended capital and burned most of its public buildings [see pages 60-65]. The Stuart portrait of Washington was one of the few items saved from the mansion during the frantic rush to evacuate the capital.

Days after the attack, the Madisons returned to find the President's House an uninhabitable shell, its rooms de-

*The mansion, whitewashed in 1798 to seal the porous sandstone walls, may have become informally known as the "White House" even before Adams moved in.

stroyed and the walls cracked and with boots heavy with mud standing speech, the longest inaugural address

"pitiful sobbing" coming from the East Room, where he found mourners gathered around a catafalque on which lay a figure shrouded in funeral dress. "Who is dead in the White House?" he asked a soldier.

"The president," he replied, "killed by an assassin."

It would be as Lincoln dreamed.

Andrew Johnson, who assumed the presidency on Lincoln's death, was unable to move himself and his family into the White House until grief-stricken Mary Todd Lincoln finally departed a month after her husband's funeral. Johnson undertook repairs to the mansion (badly run down during the war years and vandalized by souvenir-hunters) but made no major alterations during his embattled tenure as chief executive—marked by impeachment proceedings in 1868.

Emphatically rejecting a proposal to obtain living quarters outside the White House, President Ulysses S. Grant exclaimed that "I love this old house!" Grant dismissed the military guard that had been posted there since the beginning of the Civil War, and installed a billiard room on the State floor. In 1873 the Grants thoroughly redecorated the mansion's interior—carrying out the most drastic changes since the fire of 1814—in a style later derided as "Steamboat Gothic." The following year their daughter Nellie was married in the East Room amid lavish "Greek Style" splendor considered to be the most extreme example of the Grants' gaudy taste.

Grant's successor, Rutherford B. Hayes, won the presidency by a single electoral vote in a much-disputed election. Because Grant feared civil unrest, at his request Hayes took the oath of office in a secret ceremony in the Red Room two days before the formal swearing-in at the Capitol.

Hayes's wife, Lucy, mother of eight and the first First Lady to hold a college degree, originated the popular custom of Easter egg rolling on the White House lawn. She obtained the sobriquet "Lemonade Lucy" when she and the president enforced total abstinence from alcohol at the White House. Complained guests, "Water flowed like champagne."

So delighted was Hayes with a demonstration of a new invention, the "speaking telephone," that he had one installed in the executive mansion in 1879. Its number: "1." About the only person the president could reach was Alexander Graham Bell. White House technology made another leap the following year with the introduction of the executive office's first typewriter.

In July 1881 the White House again was the sad scene of a dying president, when James Garfield became the second American chief executive to fall victim to an assassin's bullet. Lying in his second-floor bedroom, the wounded president lingered at death's door for weeks. Finally, in September, after being carried by train to a cottage on the New Jersey seashore, he weakened and died.

To Garfield's successor, widower Chester A. Arthur, the White House looked like a "badly kept barracks." Undertaking renovations, he threw out twenty-four wagonloads of household effects and had the lot sold at public auction. He then summoned designer Louis Comfort Tiffany to splendorize the place in Art Nouveau. Gold paint and red velvet abounded. The *pièce de résistance* was opalescent Tiffany glass installed in a floor-to-ceiling screen in the first-floor hall.

"Elegant Arthur" added two new bathrooms, enlarged the greenhouses, filled White House closets with eighty pairs of trousers, hosted elaborate dinners (including one that boasted twenty-four courses), and was delighted to use the first White House elevator, installed in 1882.

Grover Cleveland, the only president to serve two nonconsecutive terms, also was the only chief executive to be married in the White House. On the day of the wedding, June 2, 1886, he stolidly worked at his desk until a few minutes before the early evening ceremony. The groom was forty-nine years of age; the beauteous bride, Frances Folsom, twenty-one.

Seeking relief from overzealous admirers and the pressures of public life, the Clevelands spent much of their time outside the executive mansion, retreating to a country home. Nevertheless one of their daughters, Esther, had the distinction of being the only presidential child born in the White House.

When Benjamin Harrison (who served between Cleveland's two terms) and his wife Caroline moved into the executive mansion in 1889, their entourage numbered eleven. Accommodations comprised five bedrooms and but one bathroom. Presenting detailed plans prepared with the assistance of the Army Corps of Engineers, the First Lady petitioned Congress without success to have the White House significantly enlarged. Failing in that enterprise, she then began the mansion's china collection.

During Harrison's incumbency, the gas chandeliers were altered to hold electric bulbs. But fearful of shocks, the Harrisons refused to touch the new switches, leaving that task to their servants.

Sadly, Carrie Harrison did not live to see the end of her husband's term; she died of tuberculosis at the White House in 1892.

Carrying the presidency to a new level of power, President William McKinley devoted much of his energy to fighting the Spanish-American War. He scarcely had time to consider drastic White House renovations proposed by the Army Corps of Engineers' Colonel Theodore Bingham, who hoped to renovate for the centennial of the mansion's occupancy.

In September 1901, six months into the president's second term, an assassin fired two shots at McKinley point-blank range at the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York—and again the White House was deprived of its occupant.

Calling the presidency "ripping, simply ripping," "Rough Rider" Theodore Roosevelt brought to the staid White House a spirit of vigor, First Lady Edith, six rambunctious children, and the mansion's most major renovation since 1814.*

"The White House is the property of the nation," noted "Teddy." "So far as it is compatible with living therein it

*The young "White House gang" kept a macaw, a black bear, two kangaroo rats, and a flying squirrel as pets. They roller-skated, rode bikes, and engaged in wooden-sword fights throughout the vast rooms. When young Archie had measles, his brothers Quentin and Kermit brought their pony, Algonquin, up in the White House elevator to visit the lad.

should be kept as it originally was." With the help of the distinguished architect Charles McKim and under the watchful eye of Edith, who oversaw the project, Roosevelt swept aside many Victorian architectural features and restored the mansion to its original classic simplicity. A significant feature of the renovation was addition of the West Wing for executive offices.

Although the term "White House" had been in popular use almost since the building was completed, not until Roosevelt's tenure did Congress finally officially so designate the mansion. Appropriately, the 1902 renovation brought to the building the form by which millions still recognize it today.

William Howard Taft in 1909 became the first chief executive to occupy the Oval Office in the new West Wing, finally freeing all of the mansion's second floor for household uses. And in what had been a stable, he kept the first cars in White House history. Ironically, Taft was also the last president to keep a cow on the grounds.

At some three hundred pounds the bulkiest president in American history, Taft once got stuck in a White House bathtub and had to be helped out, necessitating construction of a special tub large enough for four average men.

The erudite Woodrow Wilson put in grueling hours, typed many of his own letters, and, during World War I, kept a flock of "lawn-mowing" sheep on the White House grounds and saw to it that their wool was sold to raise money for the Red Cross. Wilson had family bedrooms added to the attic of the mansion.

In keeping with the spirit of the "Roaring Twenties" and America's postwar return to "normalcy," the White House of Warren and Florence Harding became a lively place characterized by parties and receptions; personal greetings to tourists by the First Lady; and—despite Prohibition Era injunctions against alcohol—liquor in the president's private quarters.

During Calvin Coolidge's administration, it was discovered that 1902 modifications to structural members in the mansion had introduced weaknesses that now were causing severe damage. Repairs in 1927 resulted in conversion of the attic into a new third floor with guest and service rooms—and a new roof design that, instead of solving the venerable structure's problems, paved the way for even more serious weaknesses that eventually would demand drastic action.

First Lady Grace Coolidge, charming and zestful, became a popular hostess of the White House, describing her temporary living quarters as "a home rich in tradition, mellow with years, hallowed with memories." She began the practice of authentically refurnishing some rooms with antiques to evoke American history.

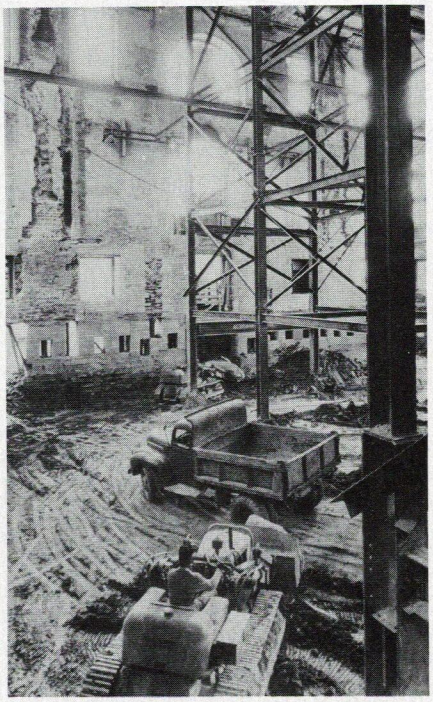
Within a month after taking office, Herbert Hoover expanded his staff by half, necessitating conversion of more space for offices. Barely before work could progress, a setback occurred in the form of a Christmas Eve fire in the West Wing. The damage soon was repaired; workers added central air conditioning during the process. Another remodeling project involved the subdividing of the previously unused basement into new office spaces.

Just as Hoover ushered in what some historians have called the modern presidency, with its large, complex support staff, so did the Hoovers sweep aside one White House tradition that no longer was feasible at the hub of a bustling modern nation. In 1932, the First Family hosted the final New Year's Day reception held for the public at the White House.

The following year, America's only president elected to four terms took office under the dark cloud of the Great Depression. The executive mansion's Diplomatic Reception Room soon became the site of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's famous "fireside chats" to the nation via radio (only belatedly was a genuine fireplace installed in the room to lend authenticity).

As the Depression years of the 1930s merged into the war years of the 1940s, stark images came to the White House: soldiers with bayoneted rifles guarding entrances; a gas mask slung on the president's wheelchair; machine-gunners on the roof; FDR meeting with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in the basement command center; a bomb-shelter beneath the hastily-constructed East Wing; and blackout curtains on the

Under President Harry Truman's direction in 1948-52, the White House underwent its most radical alteration. A new steel-framed building—safe, sound, and fireproof—was in effect erected within the original sandstone walls.



WHITE HOUSE INTERIOR DURING 1948-52 RECONSTRUCTION; COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE.

Inside the White House

Key family and state rooms in the White House appear in this view of a one-inch-to-the-foot scale model, currently on exhibit at the National Museum of American History in Washington, D.C. [see page 16]. The view shows the south side of the mansion.



1 Master Bedroom Suite
Until Theodore Roosevelt added the West Wing in 1902 to separate work and living areas, the First Family's quarters were cramped and open to the public. Since then the presidential suite has remained private, much to the relief of its occupants.

2 President's Study
Created during the 1902 renovation, this study has been used to receive official visitors. Ronald and Nancy Reagan often dined here.

3 Yellow Room
Until 1902 the Louis XVI neoclassical Yellow Oval Room was the original "Oval Office." Here on New Year's Day 1801, John Adams first held a public reception in a tradition not suspended until Herbert Hoover in 1933 canceled what had become an ordeal. It now serves as a formal drawing room for the First Family and as a reception room for dignitaries.

4 President's Office
This historically significant room served ten administrations as Cabinet Room. After Lou Hoover furnished it with Monroe-era adornments, it became the "Monroe Room." John F. Kennedy refurnished it as Ulysses S. Grant knew it and renamed it the "Treaty Room." Revamped as an office and sitting room for George Bush, it now serves as his private meeting room.

5 Lincoln Suite
Abraham Lincoln used this bedroom, now decorated primarily in 1850-70 Victorian style, as an office and cabinet room; he likely never slept here. Empty until 1825, the sitting room was a presidential staff office until 1902. The suite now houses personal First Family guests, who may recline in chairs obtained by Mary Todd Lincoln.

6 State Dining Room
As many as 140 guests now may dine in this formal room, originally much smaller and once a drawing room, office, or Cabinet Room until Andrew Jackson gave it the current designation. Teddy Roosevelt's big-game trophies once dominated the paneled walls, now painted ivory and finished in eighteenth-century neoclassical English decor.

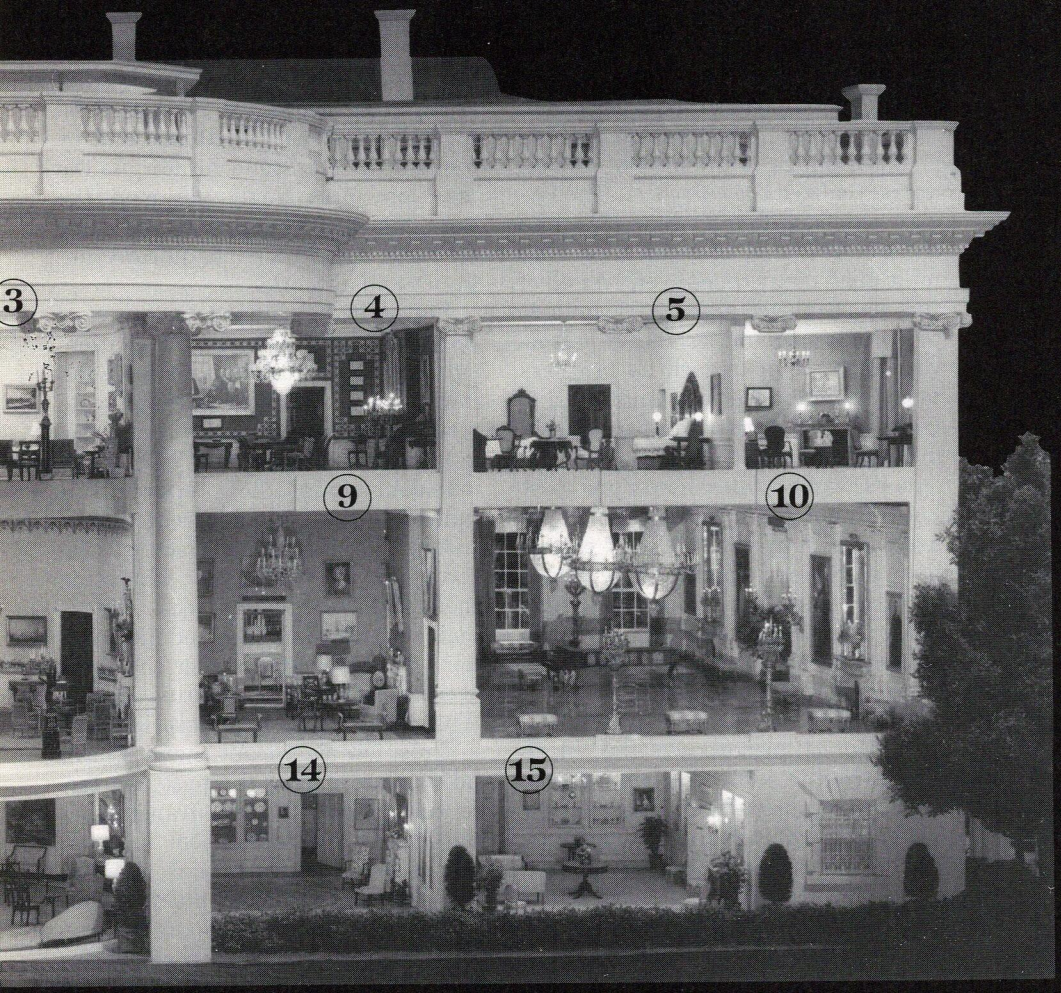
7 Red Room
This sumptuous state room, redecorated by Jackie Kennedy in 1810-1830 Empire style, once was "the President's Antichamber" to the Cabinet Room. Dolley Madison held fashionable weekly receptions here. Generally used as a parlor or sitting room, the Red Room is sometimes the location of small dinner parties.

8 Blue Room
This elegant oval state reception room, furnished with many French Empire-style objects, reflects James Monroe's tastes and features chairs he purchased. Six original presidential portraits hang here where the only presidential wedding in the mansion—Grover Cleveland's—took place.

9 Green Room
This state room first served as a "Lodging Room." Other uses included card room, bed-

MODEL BY JOHN AND JAN ZWEIFEL; PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN HISTORY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.

During the course of two centuries, White House facilities have vastly expanded to meet the growing personal and administrative needs of the chief executive and his family–but without seriously detracting from the historic mansion's appearance. Through the addition of a third floor, East and West wings, additional basement levels, and other unobtrusive installations, the complex has expanded from the original structure's fewer than 40 rooms to more than 130.



room, dining room, sitting room, and drawing room. Redecorated with green silk after the 1814 fire, it was soon dubbed the "Green Drawing Room." Eleanor Roosevelt here held her "female Cabinet" where officials' wives reputedly sewed and gossiped. With its Federal style decor, the room now serves as a parlor for teas, receptions, and occasional formal dinners.

10 East Room
Dominated by life-size portraits of George and Martha Washington, the largest and most famous of the state rooms features the mansion's oldest possession—a Gilbert Stuart portrait of George Washington. Hoban's "Public Audience Room" has seen many historic events despite its beginning as Abigail Adams's laundry room. Bodies of seven presidents have lain in state here; several weddings took place here; Teddy Roosevelt's children roller-skated here.

11 Library
A laundry area until 1902, this briefly served as a "Gentlemen's Ante-room," becoming a library in 1935. Furnished in the late Federal style, its informality makes it a comfortable setting for small teas and meetings.

12 Map Room
This chamber, which served as Franklin D. Roosevelt's situation room during World War II, is now a private meeting room for the president and First Lady. Furnishings include Thomas Jefferson's lap desk.

13 Diplomatic Reception Room
Once a boiler room and later the site of FDR's fireside chats, this oval entrance hall with American Federal-era furnishings serves as a gathering room at state functions. A magnificent 1834 panorama and an oval rug with the seals of all fifty states dominate the room.

14 China Room
Carrie Harrison in 1889 began the famed china collection representing every president. Edith Wilson redesignated the former "Presidential Collection Room" in 1917.

15 Vermeil Room
Also called the Gold Room, this display room serves on formal occasions as a ladies' sitting room. A stunning vermeil or gilded silver collection dominates the chamber.

West Wing
By century's turn, the mansion was bursting at the seams, necessitating the 1902 construction of the West Wing (out of view to left of photo) and two later enlargements. It features the president's famed Oval Office, Cabinet Room, Roosevelt Room, reception room, and Situation Room. The Rose Garden, in a colonial-era design, graces the grounds.

East Wing
Hastily constructed during World War II, the East Wing (out of view to right of picture) supplied three floors of offices and an air raid shelter. Mansion tours begin in the lobby here. ★

The White House has withstood time, fire, alteration, and enlargement. Yet its basic integrity remains respected, honor still being paid to James Hoban's original design.

windows at night.

Roosevelt, an amateur architect and old-house enthusiast, inaugurated one remodeling project after another. Thanks to a switch of responsibility for federal buildings to the National Park Service, he no longer had to go through the Army Engineers. The result was an entirely remodeled and greatly expanded West Wing. Roosevelt also oversaw construction of new offices in the East Wing; a ground-floor library; relocation of the Oval Office to its present location; relandscaping of the grounds, and installation of an indoor swimming pool—donated to the polio-crippled president by school children.

Succeeding to the nation's highest office following Roosevelt's sudden death from a cerebral hemorrage in 1945, Harry S. Truman secured the unconditional surrender of Germany and Japan, closing a bleak chapter in world history. Truman's years as chief executive also would be significant ones in White House history.

By the time Truman arrived on the scene, the internal structure of the executive mansion had become dangerously weakened, not only by the ravages of time but by poorly engineered alterations in 1902 and again in 1927. When a leg of daughter Margaret Truman's piano crashed through her bedroom floor, knocking down plaster in the family dining room below, the president realized that drastic measures were necessary. He ordered a reconstruction project—eventually costing $5.76 million—that amounted to gutting the old structure almost entirely and rebuilding it from the inside out. While work proceeded, the Trumans lived in nearby Blair House.

During the four-year project, the White House became a virtually new house, undergoing its most radical alteration since 1815-18. A new steel-framed building—safe, sound, and fireproof—was in effect erected within the original sandstone walls. Two new basement levels were carved out under the house. A controversial Truman touch—a balcony added to the South Portico in 1948—marked the last significant exterior alteration made at the mansion to date.

"It was Truman," says historian William Seale, "who, within the unchanged image of the original house, at last realized the palace. . . . The levels went from four to six floors, and the luxuries and conveniences were multiplied many times over." Yet all of this was achieved at a significant cost to history; much material that preservationists would regard as priceless today was dumped into landfills, distributed to federal agencies, or sold piecemeal as souvenirs.

For Dwight D. Eisenhower and First Lady Mamie, used to frequent moves necessitated by his military career, their eight years in the White House marked their longest stay in any one house. The Diplomatic Reception Room was redecorated in Period Style during his administration.

For all practical purposes, the White House, by the 1952 completion of the Truman reconstruction, had seen its last major architectural alternations; most changes since have been limited to interior decoration. The West Wing has been the primary target for addition and change.

Following Grace Coolidge's lead in reintroducing period furnishings to White House rooms, during John F. Kennedy's administration First Lady Jacqueline wrought dramatic interior decorative changes. "It looks like a home where nothing has ever taken place," Jackie lamented upon her arrival. "There is no trace of the past." Whereupon the elegant First Lady worked to turn the mansion into a museum of American history, overseeing redecoration of many rooms with historically appropriate and significant objects and artworks.

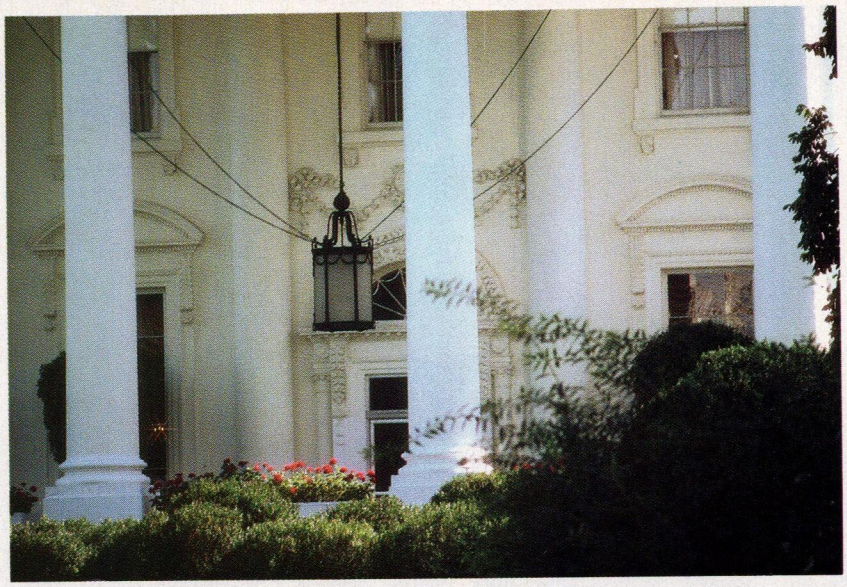
For the first time in White House history, the project gained a legal format by Congressional legislation that ensured the building would be preserved and interpreted properly. The White House Historical Association was established as a private nonprofit organization in 1961.

President Lyndon Johnson continued this work with an executive order creating a Committee for the Preservation of the White House and by appointing a full-time curator. As the mansion increasingly assumed the aura of a museum, Americans came forward with many significant antiques and artworks.

Reflecting heightened awareness of the principles of historic preservation, subsequent administrations have followed these examples in helping to return the mansion to its classic beginnings. No longer has each new president altered the interior to suit individual tastes and current trends. Instead, incoming chief executives receive an allowance for decorating their personal quarters, while the remainder of the mansion and its collections fall essentially under the aegis of the preservation committee and the White House Historical Association.

Thus, few significant changes have taken place during the past quarter-century. Richard Nixon transformed the indoor swimming pool into enlarged press quarters and had the mansion illuminated at night so that the nation could admire its beauty. First Lady Patricia Nixon added antiques and paintings to the White House collection. Gerald Ford had an outdoor swimming pool installed. Jimmy Carter introduced the first computer to the mansion, while First Lady Roslyn Carter further increased the fine art collection. Supporters of Ronald Reagan donated funds for decorating some thirty-four second- and third-floor rooms, finished for the first time in the house's history. And under George Bush, the executive offices became more fully computerized.

Today the presidential family's private quarters in the White House comprise several of the twenty-five or so rooms on the second and third floors. Rooms rich in history abound—the Queen's Bedroom, Lincoln Bed-



room, Yellow Oval Room, and President's Dining Room among them. The third floor contains bedrooms, a solarium, small kitchen, and storage rooms.

The West Wing houses the crucially important work space of the chief executive and members of his staff. Here is the nerve center: the Oval Office, the Cabinet Room, and the globe-watching Situation Room.

There are some fifty rooms in the White House proper and about eighty more in the East and West wings. Within the complex, from attic to underground labyrinth, are a kitchen that can turn out two hundred elegant meals at a time; a clinic with a physician and three nurses; a small motion picture theater; a one-lane bowling alley; and an exercise room.

Ninety-six household and maintenance workers keep the mansion in order. They include housemen, maids, butlers, doormen, electricians, plumbers, and painters. Cleaning forces contend with one hundred and fifty windows, seven hundred thousand square feet of wood floors, and fifteen thousand square feet of carpeting.

The mansion houses a priceless collection of several thousand historical objects—among them cut-glass chandeliers, Duncan Phyfe settees, silk taffeta draperies, and works by such artists as Jasper Cropsey, Rembrandt Peale, John Singer Sargent, and Gilbert Stuart. Since 1988 the White House has been formally accredited as a museum by the American Association of Museums.

The mansion and its eighteen-acre setting, designated "Reservation No. 1" of the National Capital parks, are maintained by the National Park Service.

The White House is one of the few residences of a chief of state in the world regularly open to the citizenry. From every state and in every season, Americans take tours of "their." house. More than a million visitors a year—as many as seven thousand on a summer day and perhaps three thousand in winter's chill—are guided through several rooms on the first and ground floors.*

The sidewalk in front of the mansion and park opposite are meccas for citizens who wish to make known their views. States a security official: "People who can't get satisfaction anywhere else eventually come here."

For security reasons, the showcase of democracy in the face of present-day realities has had to take on the aspects of an electronic enclave. Sensing devices protect the premises and grounds. Security procedures are tested almost constantly by the curious, the troubled, and sometimes the malevolent. Roughly on a monthly basis, some unauthorized individual or another attempts to enter the mansion or its grounds by force or guile. The Secret Service typically arrests more than three hundred "unwelcome visitors" a year—individuals disoriented, drunk, or potentially psychotic.

Twenty decades have come and gone, each leaving its particular mark upon and within the imposing white edifice at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. Yet the White House seems ever to be in style.

In this, its bicentennial year, the structure stands resplendent. During the past dozen years, the edifice has been carefully stripped of thirty-two layers of white paint—revealing the Virginia sandstone that forms its walls. A coating of carefully blended new paint—of a hue called "Whisper White"—has been applied, restoring the mansion's luster to its fullness. Strikingly, the whiteness gleams in sunlight, but gives off a subtle golden-white glow when viewed at night.

The house has withstood time, fire, alteration, adaptation, and enlargment. Yet its basic integrity remains respected, honor still being paid to James Hoban's original design for America's most famous home.

The timelessness of the place, however, has to do not so much with the senses as with the spirit—a feeling that imbued George Washington's own vision of "permanence." The idea called America.

It is old. It is changing. It is new.

The White House endures—a place of history made and in the making. It symbolizes the dreams of the visionaries who created it, the lifestyles of the presidents who inhabited it, and the values and aspirations of the people of the nation—those to whom it ultimately belongs. ★

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New York writer Edward Oxford is a frequent contributor to American History Illustrated. *His three-part series on the 1941 Pearl Harbor attack—appearing in the July/August through November/December 1991 issues—recently received the American Society of Journalists and Authors 1992 Excellence in Writing Award for Reporting in a General Circulation Publication.*

NORTH PORTICO DETAIL; PHOTOGRAPH BY ROBERT LLEWELLYN.



Audacious Admiral Sir George Cockburn dealt the young American republic a memorable and humiliating blow when his troops occupied and torched its capital city—including the Congressional Chambers and presidential mansion—during the War of 1812.

The Man Who Burned Washington

by Gary Glynn

The ornately uniformed British officer leaned back in the American president's chair. In one hand he held a lighted cigar, in the other a decanter of James Madison's liquor. Rear Admiral Sir George Cockburn, lord over all he surveyed in Washington, D.C., paused to enjoy the fruits of victory while his soldiers rummaged through Dolley Madison's wardrobes.

After sampling the president's victuals and drinking a toast to "Jemmy's" health, as he derisively called Madison, Cockburn chose one of the chief executive's old hats and one of Dolley's embroidered chair cushions for souvenirs. His officers also made off with trophies to commemorate their visit to the President's House: one claimed a clean shirt from Madison's wardrobe; another found a sword to his liking. Soldiers and Marines appropriated the silver and plates from the table after consuming the dinner intended for the president and his cabinet.

Major General Robert Ross, meanwhile, "was collecting in the drawing-room all the furniture to be found, and was preparing to set fire to it." When arrangements were complete, Cockburn gave the order to his sailors. "Each man was station'd at a window, with his pole and machine of wild-fire against it, at the word of command, at the same instant the windows were broken & this wild-fire thrown in, so that an instantaneous conflagration took place & the whole building was wrapt in flames and smoke."

The night of August 24, 1814 was overcast and stormy in the nation's capital, and flashes of lightning provided appropriately dramatic counterpoints to the flames that enveloped not only the White House but also the Capitol and Treasury buildings, the Navy Yard, and various private residences. British subaltern George Gleig later recalled "the blazing of houses, ships, and stores, the report of exploding magazines, and the crash of falling roofs" as the city burned. "It would be difficult to conceive a finer spectacle than that which presented itself. . . . The sky was brilliantly illumined by the different conflagrations; and a dark red light was thrown upon the road, sufficient to permit each man to view distinctly his comrade's face. . . ."

Several miles away, President Madison fled into Virginia on roads clogged with thousands of his demoralized and defeated militiamen. Attorney General Richard Rush, who rode with the president, recalled afterward "the vivid impression upon my eye of columns of flame and smoke, ascending . . . from the Capitol, President's House, and other public edifices, as the whole were on fire, some burning slowly, others with bursts of flame and sparks mounting high up in the dark horizon. . . . If at intervals the dismal sight was lost to our view, we got it again from some hilltop or eminence where we paused to look at it."

Although Americans would achieve several gratifying victories during their three-year conflict with Great Britain, the occupation and destruction of the virtually defenseless U.S. capital city by Cockburn and his troops marked a humbling low point in the War of 1812 that would not be forgotten. Even today, the British admiral's invasion and torching of Washington, D.C. must rank as one of the most humiliating episodes in U.S. history.

George Cockburn (pronounced "Coburn") was just ten years old when he joined the Royal Navy as a midshipman in 1782. Helped by influential family friends and relatives,

PORTRAIT OF REAR ADMIRAL SIR GEORGE COCKBURN BY I.J. HALL; COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, GREENWICH, ENGLAND.

VOYAGE OF DESTINY *Continued from page 43*

the Niño family of Moguer, served as pilot, though Columbus actually set the course and Niño merely carried out his orders. Diego de Arana, cousin of Columbus's lover Beatriz, served as *alguacil* or marshal, presumably responsible for keeping order.

The flagship also carried a notary named Rodrigo de Escobedo, a surgeon named Juan Sánchez, and an interpreter named Luis de Torres. Torres knew several languages, including a bit of Arabic, which, it was hoped, would enable him to communicate with the Asians the explorers expected to encounter. In addition to these men, the flagship carried eight more officers, eleven able seamen, ten apprentice seamen, and a page, plus three men whose names and duties have not been discovered.

Martín Alonso Pinzón served as captain of the larger of the two caravels—the *Pinta*—and his brother Francisco Martín Pinzón served as master. The ship's owner, Cristóbal Quintero, accompanied the expedition (albeit reluctantly) as an able seaman, and Cristóbal García Sarmiento was ship's pilot. In addition, the *Pinta* carried four other officers, ten able seamen, and eight apprentice seamen, for a total of twenty-six men.

The smaller caravel, the *Santa Clara* or *Niña*, was commanded by Vicente Yáñez Pinzón, the third Pinzón brother to accompany the expedition. Juan Niño, who owned the ship and for whom she was nicknamed, served as master. The pilot was Sancho Ruiz de Gama. Four other officers, eight able seamen, six apprentice seamen, and three other men whose positions are unknown made up the total of twenty-four men on the *Niña*.

Overall, the men on the expedition had ample experience of ocean sailing and had been toughened by years at sea. Their compensation for the voyage was standard for the time: the masters and pilots each earned 2,000 maravedis per month; the sailors 1,000; and the apprentices 666.

Surprisingly, despite all that we know about the crews of Columbus's ships, almost nothing is known about the vessels themselves. In fact, the relative numbers of crewmen on the *Santa María*, the *Pinta*, and the *Niña* provide some of the only firm evidence we have about the size of these ships. Two other pieces of evidence help a bit. An Italian named Michele de Cuneo, who accompanied Columbus on his second voyage and wrote a lively account of their activities, mentioned in passing that the *Niña* was about sixty *toneladas* (a measure of cargo capacity, roughly equivalent to the same number of modern displacement tons). Assuming this was the same *Niña*, we at least have an estimate for the smallest ship in the fleet. We also have a remark, by a writer nearly a century later, that the largest of Columbus's ships was "very little larger than 100 *toneladas*."

Recently, other information has been found regarding the rigging and life history of the *Niña*, and we know from the surviving abstract of Columbus's diary that each ship carried or towed a small launch or boat for going ashore and for communicating between the vessels at sea.

Using these bits and pieces of evidence, plus what is known or assumed about other ships of the time and about the meaning of a *tonelada*, scholars have made estimates of the sizes and configurations of the *Santa María*, the *Pinta*, and the *Niña*. Without getting into the technicalities of those arguments, we can be sure at least that all three ships were fairly small for trans-ocean voyaging.

The *Santa María*, a *nao*, was probably fairly typical of merchant vessels of the time. She would have carried square sails on a foremast and a mainmast, with topsails, and a triangular lateen sail on a mizzenmast farther aft. Given the estimate of slightly more than one hundred *toneladas* and the size of the crew, this ship was probably no more than about nineteen feet in width or beam, and about fifty-eight feet long on the lower of her two decks.

The caravels *Pinta* and *Niña* were somewhat smaller, at about seventy-five *toneladas* and sixty *toneladas* respectively. We estimate the *Pinta*'s dimensions at a maximum of about eighteen feet wide and fifty-five feet in length. The *Niña*'s measurements would have been similar, at no more than about sixteen feet in width and fifty feet in length. The *Pinta* was rigged like the *Santa María*; the *Niña* began the voyage rigged with two masts and two lateen sails.

THE VOYAGE

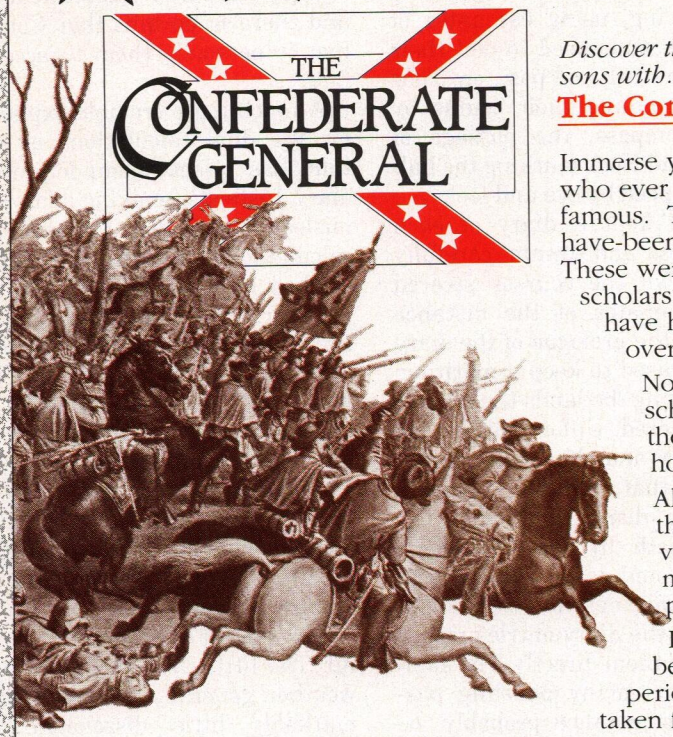
The departure date for the little fleet was set for the early morning of August 3, a Friday. August 2 was an important religious holiday for the region—the feast of Nuestra Señora de los Angeles, the patroness of the monastery of La Rábida. There could be no question of missing that event, given the importance of La Rábida and its Franciscans to the region and to all on board the three ships.

An hour before dawn on August 3, the three ships left Palos, heading down the Tinto River past La Rábida on the left bank and then into the Atlantic. The first leg of the voyage was an easy sail that would take the expedition to the Canary Islands.

Tradition holds that on the same morning that Columbus's small fleet left Palos, a group of ships carrying the last of Spain's Jews into exile also sailed from that port. The year 1492 marked the last medieval expulsion of Jews from western Europe, even as it marked the European discovery of the New World.

Columbus's choice of the Canary Islands as the real starting point for the Atlantic crossing may have been either his greatest stroke of luck or proof of his genius as a mariner. Columbus himself was silent on the matter, but the islands are ideally suited as a point of departure for westbound transatlantic sailing, even today. We know that Columbus was acquainted with the winds and currents of the eastern Atlantic, and he was aware that Portuguese expeditions trying to sail west from the Azores all had been forced back by head winds. He also knew that his commission from the crown would guarantee assistance in the Castilian-controlled Canaries in reprovisioning and repairing his ships.

En route to the Canaries, the *Pinta* experienced handling problems and



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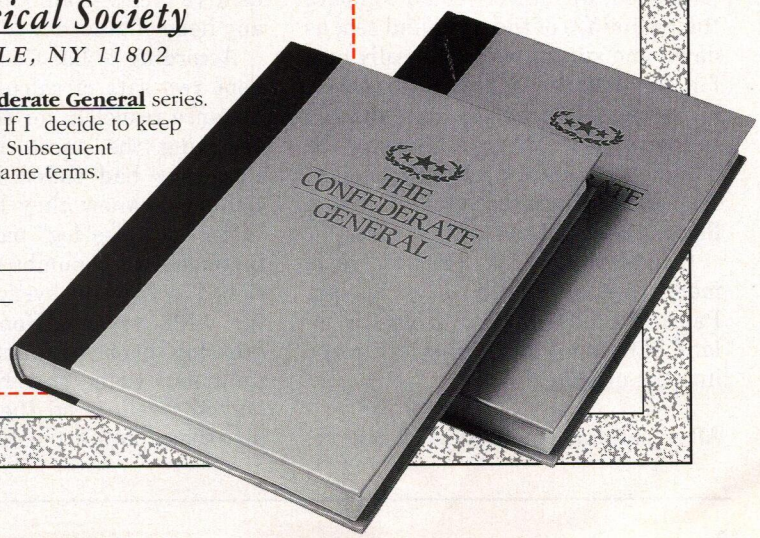
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twice suffered damage to her rudder. Columbus suspected sabotage on the part of crewman Gómez Rascón and *Pinta*'s owner Cristóbal Quintero, who had not wanted to go on the voyage. Leaving Martín Alonso and the *Pinta* off the island of Gran Canaria, Columbus continued on with the other two ships to the island of Gomera to top off provisions. After the *Pinta*'s repairs were completed, she joined the others at Gomera. The *Niña* had not been handling well either, so seamen rerigged her at Gomera, changing her two-masted lateen rig to a three-masted combination of square and lateen sails, like the other two ships.

With water barrels filled and fresh provisions and firewood loaded on, the fleet was ready to resume its voyage. Columbus reminded his officers and the crews about the royal instructions he had received—to explore directly to the west without deviating into Portuguese-mandated waters—and issued his own fleet orders. He warned the men that they should not expect to find land before they had gone 750 leagues. To insure that the ships did not blunder onto reefs or islands, after 700 leagues they no longer would sail all night but would lie to each midnight and resume their voyage at dawn.

Due to their varying sailing characteristics, even under ordinary conditions the three vessels were sure to become scattered. The *Pinta* was the fastest of the three ships, and both of the caravels were faster than the *Santa María*. Columbus ordered the two caravels to close up with his flagship twice daily, at dawn and sunset. In addition to exchanging general information, the officers could compare their readings of the wind and sea, as dawn and sunset were generally best for long-distance sightings and for celestial observations. At other times a cannon-shot would signal the ships to assemble, and the first crew to sight land would fire a cannon and raise a flag to the top of the highest mast.

On September 6, 1492, a little more than a month after leaving Palos, the fleet set sail from the island of Gomera and began its voyage into the unknown.

After passing out of view of Hierro, the last island in the Canaries, on September 9, the three ships sailed due west along the northern edge of the belt of northeast trade winds. Columbus and his pilots navigated by dead reckoning, using estimates of course, time, and speed to plot their approximate track and position. That meant determining their course by magnetic compass; the passage of time by a sand-clock marking the half hours; and speed by eye and feel.

Columbus kept a diary of each day's progress and events, carefully marking down the courses steered and his estimates of the distance traveled. In the prologue of the diary he also promised to keep a maritime chart indicating the lands the expedition encountered. Unfortunately, the original diary and chart have disappeared. All that remains is an abstract of the diary, made after Columbus's death by the Dominican monk Bartolomé de Las Casas, who was not a mariner and who often summarized the diary entries rather than quoting them directly. The summary contains many puzzling passages, a circumstance probably attributable to his unfamiliarity with the sea. And even when Las Casas said that he was quoting Columbus directly, we cannot be sure that he quoted accurately. The peculiar spelling and sentence structure that Columbus employed further clouds the diary's meaning in many places. The abstract cannot be relied upon, therefore, as a basis for making definitive conclusions regarding the track followed by the ships. Only if the original diary is found some day will this record of the voyage enable us to re-create Columbus's track with any hope of accuracy.

According to Las Casas, Columbus kept two sets of calculations of the distance traveled, for the purpose of deceiving the crews into thinking that they had sailed less far than Columbus knew they had. This notion of a "false log" passed into the mythology of Columbus and is mentioned in virtually every discussion of the 1492 voyage. Nonetheless, the false-log theory does not make sense. Columbus would have had to fool not only the sailors on the flagship but also the captains, masters, and pilots aboard the other two vessels, all of whom were presumably experienced navigators. On several occasions during the voyage, the pilots of all three vessels compared their calculations, and there is no hint that Columbus had to persuade them to accept his figures.

A much more credible explanation for the dual calculations is simply that Las Casas misunderstood the diary. Instead of making a false log to mislead the crews, Columbus first calculated the distance traveled by a method he had learned as a young mariner; then he calculated the equivalent in terms the sailors understood. A similar situation arises when modern travelers move back and forth between countries that use miles and those that use kilometers. In figuring the distance they have gone, travelers tend to begin with the system they know better and then calculate the equivalent in the other system, if necessary.

The voyage was mainly uneventful. The little fleet encountered good weather, generally calm seas, and remarkably little dissension. From September 16 on, according to Columbus's log, the mariners enjoyed fair weather akin to April in Seville—an evocative phrase for anyone who has ever experienced the warm, soft days of spring in Andalusia. Also in mid-September they first encountered the sea grasses of the Sargasso Sea, which they had been warned not to fear by the old mariner back in Palos. Instead of fear, they felt hope, believing the Sargasso grasses to be plants torn from nearby land.

During such a quiet and uneventful voyage, there was time to watch the sea and sky carefully for signs and portents. Officers and crew alike closely noted each sighting of birds, identifying them and indicating whether they were seabirds or land birds, for the sailors believed that land birds would not venture far from land. They were all aware that the Portuguese had followed flights of birds to locate previously unknown islands. In fact, journal entries from September 16 forward record a succession of sightings that the men interpreted as signs of land nearby, including birds flying overhead, whales

and dolphins in the sea, and crabs among the Sargasso grasses.

The abstracted diary of the voyage says nothing about living conditions on board, but there is no reason that Columbus would have mentioned them, even in his original diary. Like other experienced mariners, he accepted the crowding, the discomfort, the poor food, and the danger as the prices one paid for going to sea.

Life on the ships cannot have been pleasant by modern standards. Conditions were cramped aboard all three vessels. Only the chief officers would have had enclosed quarters for sleeping and for stowing their belongings. The rest of the men simply would have staked out some corner of the deck as their own, trying to stay out of the way of lines and tackle for the working of the ship.

The shipboard diet would not have differed much from the diet on land, except that ship's biscuit (twice-baked small loaves of bread) would have been the staple instead of fresh bread. Legume stews with salted meat and fish, presumably seasoned with onions, garlic, and olive oil, constituted the main meal.

Fresh water and some fresh food were usually the last supplies taken on board before a voyage. Nonetheless, after a relatively short time at sea the fresh provisions began to spoil, and only salted and dried foods remained edible. Even biscuits and other dried foods absorbed the moist air and unavoidably decayed, especially in warm weather. If vermin got into the supplies—as they did almost invariably—the decay proceeded even more rapidly. After a few days, the water, too, began to sour. Ships provisioned in Andalusia also carried local white wine, which traveled much better than water, as a major source of calories and good morale.

For more than two weeks the winds were so regular and the seas so calm that the crews finally began to complain. The sailors feared that those conditions meant there never would be favorable or sufficient winds to take them back to Spain. On September 22, Martín Alonso Pinzón, on the *Pinta*, asked for Columbus's chart, which indicated certain islands. After studying the chart for several days, Pinzón was convinced that they were in the vicinity of the islands. He shared his conclusions with Columbus on the twenty-fifth and returned the chart to him on a line stretched between their two ships.

That very evening, Martín Alonso called out from the poop of the *Pinta* that he saw land, to the great excitement of all three crews. In thanks and relief, the crews said the "Gloria in excelsis deo," probably adding it to the regular prayers that they recited every day at nightfall. Several men climbed the masts and rigging and confirmed the sighting. Columbus estimated that the land lay about 25 leagues (approximately 90 statute miles) to the southwest, and the fleet changed course to approach it. The next day, with breezes sweet and soft, and with the sea as calm as a river, the explorers had to admit disappointment. The men and their leaders had seen a mirage, and in their eagerness to find land they persuaded themselves that it was real.

Resuming their former course, the ships continued west. On October 3 Columbus estimated that they had passed the region where his chart showed islands. Nonetheless he was determined to press on toward what he considered to be the mainland of Asia. He probably did this in large part to maintain his authority over the captains and their crews. He had told them to expect land due west of the Canaries. Allowing side excursions in search of islands would diminish the aura of certainty that he had been at pains to project.

On October 6, Martín Alonso Pinzón asked Columbus to change course to the southwest, which caused Columbus to suspect that Pinzón wanted to seek Cipango (Japan) and its golden roofs, which Marco Polo had described. Columbus refused to alter course, insisting on continuing due west.

On that same day, Columbus faced a near-mutiny when the men of the *Santa María* began demanding a return to Spain. Many times Columbus had told the crew they should start looking for land at 700 leagues and should expect to sight land at 750 leagues. By October 6, according to the pilots of all three ships, they had gone 800 leagues. In response to the complaints of his crew, Columbus decided to consult the other captains, and he ordered a cannon fired to signal the other ships to close up with his. When they had assembled, Columbus told the other captains about his crew's desire to return and asked them for their opinions. Their responses, as recalled by witnesses in legal cases years later, were wholly supportive of continued exploration.

Vicente Yáñez said they ought to go two thousand leagues before turning back. Martín Alonso's response to Columbus's question was variously remembered. In one version, when told that the crew of the *Santa María* was near revolt, he advised Columbus: "Your lordship should hang a half dozen of them or throw them into the sea, and if you don't dare to, my brothers and I will come alongside and do it, for an armada that sailed with the mandate of such high princes cannot go back without good news." Another version had him saying: "Onward, onward, for this is an armada and embassy of such high princes as our lords the monarchs of Spain."

One witness remembered that Martín Alonso appealed to the mariners' pride, saying that "God will grant us the victory to discover land, for God would never want us to return in such shame." Still another witness recalled a more philosophical response: "Remember, your lordship, that in the house of Pedro Vázquez de la Frontera I promised you that neither I nor any of my relatives would return to Palos before we found land, so long as the people were healthy, the ships new, and we have plenty of provisions; now then, what is lacking? The people are healthy, the ships new, and we had plenty of provisions. Why do we have to go back? Whoever wants to can go back, but I want to go on, for I have to discover land or die in the attempt."

Although the unrest seems mild by many standards, it nevertheless is safe to assume that on October 6 Columbus faced a restive crew on his flagship. When he sought the opinion of the other captains, both immedi-

ately and strongly backed continued exploration.

On October 7 the crew of the *Niña*, which had sailed ahead, gave the signal that land had been sighted, raising a flag at the masthead and firing a cannon. But for the second time the sighting proved illusory. When the ships came together that evening at sunset, no one had been able to verify a landfall. As the ships approached their sunset rendezvous, however, all present noted multitudes of birds flying toward the southwest. The mariners interpreted this phenomenon in two ways, both of which reinforced the idea that land was near. Either the birds were flying home to sleep for the night, or they were migrating in anticipation of the approaching winter in the north.

Impressed by the huge flocks and mindful of Portuguese discoveries made by following birds, Columbus agreed to deviate from his westward course and sail west-southwest for two days. From the evening of the seventh the explorers followed that course, with calm seas and favorable winds. By the evening of the ninth they still had not sighted land, and when the wind shifted they changed course toward the west again. In the spare but hopeful words of the abstracted diary, "All night they heard birds pass."

On October 10, Columbus again turned away from a straight westward course to sail west-southwest. The diary does not comment on this course change, though Columbus had initially promised to deviate from his westward course for only two days. A laconic notice in the diary provides a possible reason for the new compass heading: the crew had begun to complain vocally about the length of the voyage and the failure to find land. According to the abstracted diary, Columbus tried to encourage his men, reminding them of what they had to gain and of his determination to continue until they found the Indies. Nothing more about the incident appears in the diary's abstract.

Other accounts indicate that the grumbling on October 10 was much more serious than Columbus's diary [illegible] The masters of all three [illegible] the Pinzón brothers, who had been quick to support a continuation of exploration as recently as October 6, now turned against Columbus. No doubt reflecting the anxiety of their crews, they expressed the fear that the nearly continuous winds blowing from east to west might make it impossible to return home at that latitude. Columbus could only answer that God had given them the weather to take them this far and he would give them proper weather to get back home.

Unconvinced that the matter should be left entirely in God's hands, the mutinous crewmen began to rattle their weapons, but Columbus urged them to reconsider. They easily could kill him and his loyal officers, he told them, but they never could hope to escape royal justice back at home. He proposed a compromise. They would continue on their westward course for two more days (or three or four—accounts vary). If they still had not found land at the end of that period, they would turn back. The Pinzones and the other officers accepted the compromise easily, returning to their ships and persuading their crews to continue the voyage.

After their near-mutiny of the day before, on October 11 the crew needed surprisingly little encouragement. All day they seized on everything they saw as a portent of an imminent landfall. They identified land birds. They eagerly scrutinized the flotsam in the ocean: a cane, a stick, a plank, another stick seemingly worked by iron, and still another covered with barnacles. At the evening rendezvous Columbus set the course again to the west. From all the signs, he was convinced the ships were approaching land. When the men of the *Santa María* assembled at sunset to say the "Salve Regina," he told them to keep a good lookout from the forecastle. He reminded them that the monarchs had promised a life annuity of 10,000 maravedis to the first man to sight land, and he himself would donate a silk jacket to the lucky fellow.

Evidently Columbus had abandoned his earlier order not to sail past midnight. Two hours after midnight, on October 12, with the *Pinta* sailing ahead, the weather cleared. In the moonlight one of the sailors on the *Pinta*, Juan Rodríguez Bermejo, saw a white sand beach and land beyond it. After his shout "Land! Land!," the *Pinta*'s crew raised a flag on its highest mast and fired a cannon.

Columbus later claimed that he had sighted land before the sailor on the *Pinta*, having seen a faint light late on the evening of October 11. He asked Pero Gutiérrez, the royal steward, to confirm the sighting, and Gutiérrez saw it too. Columbus also consulted Rodrigo Sánchez, the fleet's royal overseer, but Sánchez was unable to see the light. Uncertain of what he had seen, Columbus did not signal the other ships. On the basis of his recollection of the events of October 11, however, he later claimed the reward for himself and saved the price of a silk jacket as well. He later may have regretted his ungenerous behavior, however, because he assigned the annuity to Beatriz Enríquez de Arana rather than keeping it for himself.

When the three ships and their crews drew together on the early morning of October 12, an island was clearly visible, but wind blowing them toward the land made the officers wary of approaching more closely until daylight. Fearing unseen rocks and shallows, the ships' commanders ordered all their canvas hauled down except the mainsails, and tacked back and forth offshore until the eagerly awaited dawn.

After sailing for thirty-six days into unknown waters, Christopher Columbus and his men had proven that there were more islands in the ocean sea. They also believed they were on the verge of establishing direct contact with Asia, its rich spice markets, and its houses roofed with gold. Instead, they were a few short hours from one of the most fateful human encounters in all recorded history—a meeting between peoples previously unknown to one another. ★

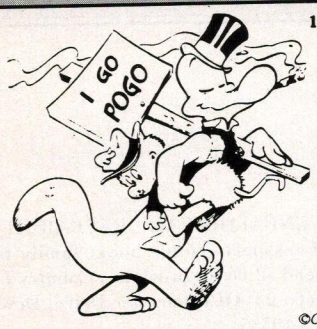
William D. Phillips, Jr. and Carla Rahn Phillips are professors of history at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. In addition to co-authoring The Worlds of Christopher Columbus, *each is author of books on fifteenth- to seventeenth-century Spain.*

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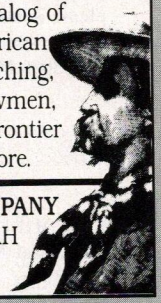
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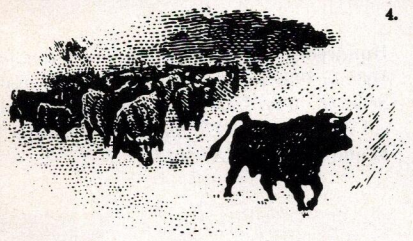
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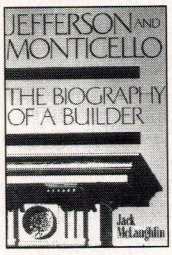
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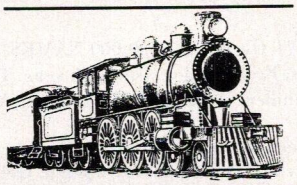
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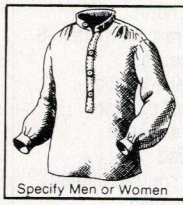
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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER, 1992

MAN WHO BURNED WASHINGTON *Continued from page 65*

pers—forced several bystanders to show him the way to the offices of the *National Intelligencer*. When he announced his plan to burn the building, two women with homes on the same block stepped forward and appealed to the admiral.

"Mrs. Brush, Mrs. Stelle and a few citizens remonstrated with him," noted an eyewitness, "assuring him that it would occasion the loss of all buildings in the row. 'Well,' said he, 'good people I do not wish to injure you, but I am really afraid my friend Josey [Joseph Gales, editor of the paper] will be affronted with me, if after burning Jemmy's palace, I do not pay him the same compliment.'"

Continued entreaties, however, finally deflected Cockburn from torching the *Intelligencer* offices. Because it was late and his men needed rest, he decided to postpone destruction of the newspaper until morning. Leaving a single soldier as a guard, he retired from the scene. One British brigade camped for the night on Capitol Hill, while the other two bivouacked at the edge of the city.

At 5:30 A.M. on August 25 Cockburn was back in the saddle and riding down Pennsylvania Avenue with the British Light Brigade. The rainstorm during the night had kept the fires from spreading, but "of the Senate-House, the President's Palace, the barracks, the dockyard, etc., nothing could be seen except heaps of smoking ruins. . . ."

Returning to the *National Intelligencer* offices, located between Sixth and Seventh streets, Cockburn supervised the wrecking of the facilities. He ordered the presses smashed and helped to dump type cases into the street, telling his men to "be sure that all the 'C's are destroyed, so the rascals can't abuse my name any more." No doubt he was amused by the previous morning's edition that had declared, "We feel assured that the number and bravery of our men will afford complete protection of the city."

Cockburn next concentrated on destroying military supplies and the remaining public buildings in the capital. The Patent Office was saved from destruction by the personal appeal of Dr. William Thornton, the director, but other buildings were not so fortunate. After noon, nature perversely added to the destruction when a terrific thunderstorm ripped the roofs off several houses.

At Greenleaf's Point Arsenal, the British captured and destroyed large amounts of military stores. But disaster struck when barrels of gunpowder in a well (dumped there either by the British or earlier by retreating Americans) exploded, killing twelve men and wounding fifty more.

Although Cockburn had encouraged his officers to take souvenirs from the White House, he forbade depredations against the civilian populace, even ordering seven men flogged for looting. He was appalled when a hysterical

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prostitute was brought in claiming she had been shot by a soldier. Cockburn threatened to execute the man responsible, but the culprit could not be identified, so the admiral gave the woman several gold coins in compensation.

By the evening of the twenty-fifth, even Cockburn was reluctant to remain so deep in enemy territory any longer. The admiral imposed a sunset-to-sunrise curfew on the city, and under the cover of darkness his men quietly slipped away from their campfires. Later that night the soldiers marched past the still-unburied bodies of casualties at Bladensburg, where Cockburn again talked with the wounded Commodore Barney, who agreed to look after eighty-three British casualties. Several days later, without "a single musket having been fired" on the withdrawal, Cockburn and his troops boarded their ships at Benedict.

Rebuilding of the gutted White House commenced in early three years passed before it again could this time by a new president, James Monroe.

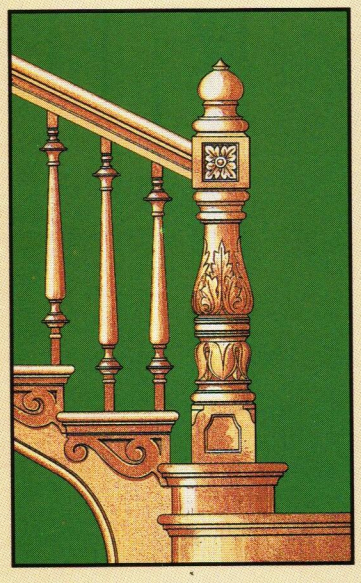
Two weeks after the triumphal capture of Washington, General Ross was fatally wounded at Fort McHenry in the battle immortalized by the "Star-Spangled Banner." Admiral Cockburn, however, continued his trademark raids until the end of the war; each foray was followed by another barrage of invective from American newspaper editors.

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Free-lance writer Gary Glynn lives in Missoula, Montana.

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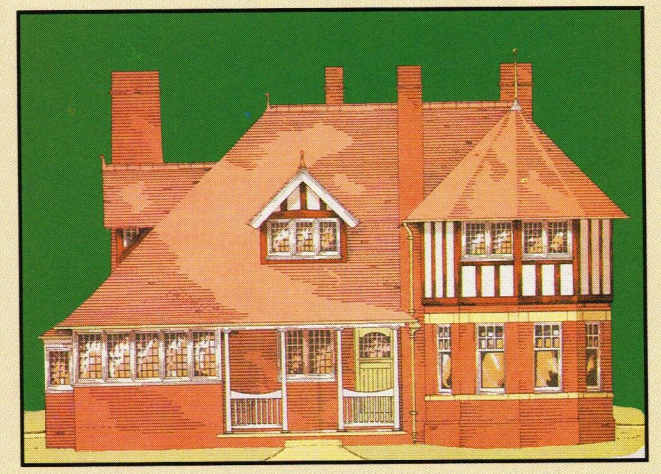
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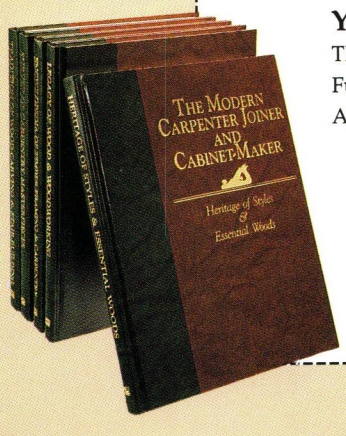
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